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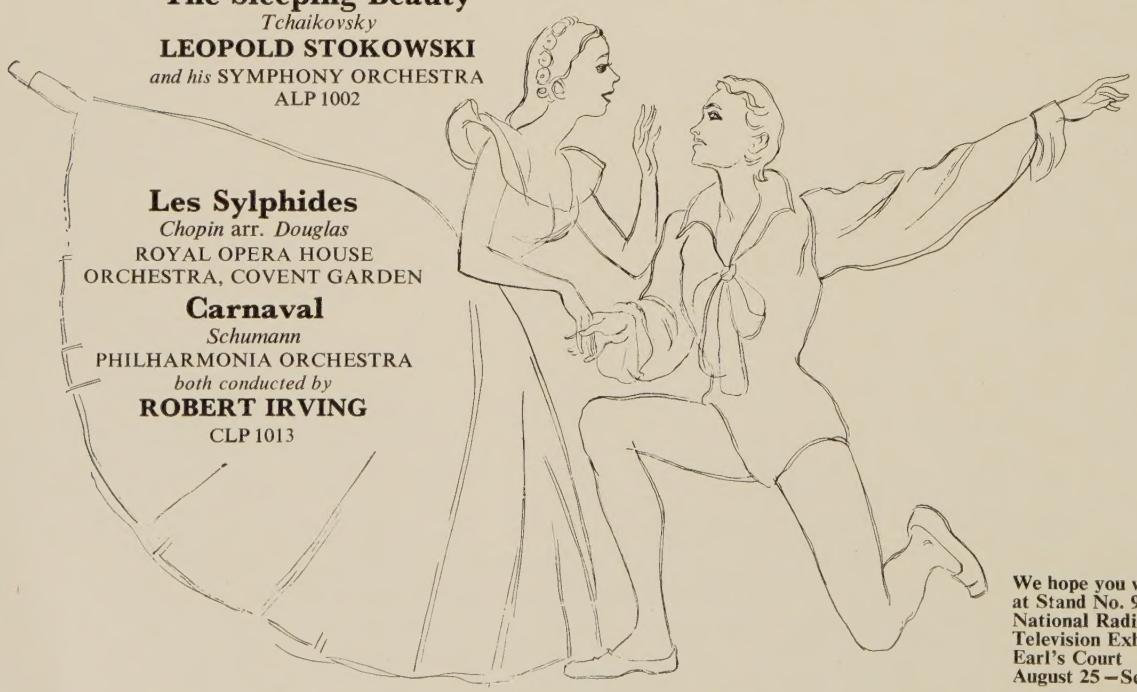

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August 1954 Vol. 5 No. 8

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
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THE REASON WHY

A QUARTER of a century can do funny things to memory—certain important moments will always stand out like mountain-peaks in an early morning mist while the rest sinks back into the rosy glow of sunrise. The little irritations become dulled, which is what they deserve. I can remember a beautiful August day twenty-five years ago. I can remember it as one usually can remember the summers of youth—warm, lazy days with the contented buzz of bees in the air and the smell of freshly-scythed grass.

This day I am thinking about—August 19, 1929—had been just one of those. It ended by being a mountain-peak day—a sad mourning peak which contrasted oddly with the beauty which nature alone can provide. I had come in for a cooling drink and to listen to the cricket results on the wireless when a single announcement shattered the world I knew. Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev had died in Venice. The announcer baldly and so inadequately stated that he had been an impresario.

I immediately got up and went back into the wonder of a Cornish evening but nature, for once, could beguile no longer. Now why? Why should a gangling schoolboy, a complete nobody who had never known Diaghilev, never even seen him in person nor met a member of his company, have had this feeling of irreparable loss? What was the power this man wielded that his death could so affect the remotest of his subjects?

These were the questions I asked myself then and I continue to ask them a quarter of a century later. There is an unbreakable tie with the events of youth because it is they that inevitably form character and taste. How lucky, then, to have been born when it was still possible to see the great company Diaghilev fashioned and while his masterful hand was still there to guide it! How lucky that the stories of the ballets he created could be the stories of one's youth and that the dancers of his company could be the heroes and heroines of fantasies woven by adolescent imagination! How lucky to have a family that realised ballet was more important than those lighter entertainments usually supposed to be a schoolboy's staple diet! Lucky also that the public school I attended happened to be so near London that, with the aid of a request to visit some non-existent doctor or dentist, it was possible to see a rare and cherished matinee. Luckier still that I was never caught in the act of this deception (though I once nearly was) because I should have been inevitably sacked and my family disgraced! Lucky indeed!

So it was that the Diaghilev ballet became a part of my youth and a world of splendour and magic opened up to me. So it was that I became acquainted with the works of the greatest painters, composers and choreographers of our time. I do not pretend that I understood it all, but so wonderful was it that I knew that it was worth discovering. Here was something that no school would ever teach me and I had to find for myself. To Diaghilev alone I owe any incentive I ever had to discover and praise the glory of art in all her phases. Today, whenever I see a new ballet, look at a new artist's work or listen to a new composer, I invariably ask myself, "What would *he* have thought of it?".

But if his death meant all that to me, what could it have meant to those near to him and closely connected with all his work? We now know that their world was shattered in a way that few men's deaths can have shattered a world. Gradually the bits were gathered together until we find ourselves in a world where ballet has reached a popularity on a scale hitherto unknown. I feel certain that all these great people who have been responsible for this astonishing renaissance of ballet will, if they are honest with themselves, admit that none of this would ever have been achieved had it not been for Diaghilev who showed them the way. Some, I fear, are not always generous enough to admit their debt. It is a sad tendency of today that people often take unto themselves the credit for something they actually owe to somebody else. The true master is seldom acknowledged.

It has been said that Diaghilev showed the glory of Russian art to the rest of the world. I would go further than that single frontier and say that Diaghilev showed the glory of the world's art to the world. No more can any human expect to achieve in his allotted span on this earth. There will never be another Diaghilev because he did it all, it only remains for the rest to carry on his work. Let us hope that we can still learn and profit from his achievements before it is too late. **P.W.**

The death mask of Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev.

A drawing by Christopher Wood of Diaghilev in Monte Carlo.

We are deeply grateful to all those who have contributed to this commemoration issue which we hope will be a lasting record of Diaghilev's achievement. Specially do we thank Miss Poppoea Vanda who has acted as Assistant Editor Extraordinary for this number; Anton Dolin for his assistance in collecting much of the material; Mr. M. Morris for loaning rare photographs from his collection; Richard Buckle for allowing us to reproduce drawings which will appear at the great exhibition he is organising for the Edinburgh Festival.

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The Background

The years which form any great creator are most important when assessing what the creator achieved. No person is in a better position to know the conditions which prevailed in St. Petersburg during Diaghilev's formative years than his greatest ballerina—Madame Karsavina.

She was with him from the start and knew all about the provincial attitude against which he fought and about the circle of intelligent men — The Pickwickians — who gave Diaghilev the background he needed for his great work.

Karsavina in St. Petersburg beneath an engraving of Vestris. This picture was taken during the period about which she writes.

IN the second part of the 19th century no well-to-do study would pass muster without the "Russian style" predominant in its interior decoration. "Douga," the high arch over a horse's neck, carved in oak, ingeniously if somewhat clumsily contrived the back of an armchair. Russian harness seemed to be the main source of inspiration to the artisan of this time; its details carved, wrought, or painted lavishly supplied the writing desk furniture; diversified by a massive horse-shoe paper weight or, maybe, by a miniature replica of a Byzantine tiara of the Tsars of old—as a handbell.

Those national motifs of interior decoration are as characteristic of the period of 1870-90 in Russia as the florid cupids are of the 18th century. Higher aspirations towards the "æsthetic" found vent in sweetly pretty village maidens leaning over the hedge or engaged in such-like seemly occupations; the maidens' brocaded sarafanes and pearl studded headdresses surprisingly immaculate considering their rustic chores. While that type of picture belonged chiefly to a boudoir, you might find in the drawing room a "boyar's wedding."

The public admired the huge realistic canvases at the exhibitions and eagerly bought the more manageable works of Makovsky, the able artist of the pseudo-Russian. No one seemed to care any more for admirable works of the genuine Russian school of painting of the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. In the attics of the big houses, in the junk shops, piles of furniture, stacks of porcelain, bided their time; their exquisite workmanship had no appeal except to a few collectors.

This bad taste was but a reflection of the public attitude to art. Good tradition and new development were alike unpopular. The static, the mediocre were generally approved. But creative artistic forces were not stagnant for want of encouragement. Several groups, small but vocal, defying derision, were preparing the way for art's renaissance in Russia.

In the sixties, the "Mighty Few," as they were derisively called, ventured further on the way of which Glinka had been the first pioneer. Headed by Rimsky-Korsakov, the five composers known later as the "Big Five" directed the Russian music towards its genuine source of inspiration—the broad melody of the folk song, the pungent Eastern cadence.

While the Big Five, invested the authority of their professional status, were gradually reforming musical taste in Russia, a few young men, just graduated from school, strove, in their frequent meetings, to define the true aims of art. With what results? The ultimate victory of their ideals. Thus the great impetus of art's renaissance in Russia came from the intellectual zeal and the passionate sincerity of youth.

The leader and the "president" of this group—for, half in earnest, half jokingly, they had formed a club—was Alexander Benois. His family being of Latin extraction, in him the East met the West and the artist was inseparable from the intellectual. Soon Bakst joined the club. The "Pickwickians," as they called themselves, had each a contribution of his own to bring to the common cause: the cause being the right of free manifestation of the original and the creative in art, no matter whether modern or classic. They rebelled against the sugary and the stale.

The gaiety of scholiasts

History, art, philosophy, mysticism, furnished the themes for discussion. It would be wrong to imagine these earnest young men as pale, emaciated scholiasts. Gaiety and the keen enjoyment of life happily blended with their intellectual fervour. If not addicted to sports, they were not averse to a good romp.

It has often been said that where there are two Russians together there are bound to be at least three political opinions. There were five members of the "club" (a cabalistic figure in the annals of Russian art?), but neither the wide divergence between their personalities nor a spark of personal jealousy ever disrupted the unity of the friends. Nouvel's biting criticism of the papers delivered on various subjects; the essential naiveté of Bakst's intuitive talent; the culture, the broad minded tolerance of Benois—all these mutually complemented each other.

Their future exploits still lying ahead; in some undefineable way the cultured taste of the little group, mainly that of Benois, dissiminated itself through wider circles. While working for the future of art they looked back to the lessons of the past. Their rediscovery of Russian decorative art of the good period mildly revolutionised the public taste. The graceful curve of swans' necks, the slightly clumsy but so luscious cornucopias of the cabinet makers of the truly good period in the Russian applied art provided now a lively trade for the antique dealers.

In the new zest of the public for "antique" there sounded the echo of the fun and laughter which livened up even the most consequential undertakings of the Benois circle. The taste for the "grotesque" (in the sense of a naive directness, not of a deformity) became noticeable amongst collectors. This may seem a trivial point but it goes to show that ponderosity was not the feature of the new movement, neither was dogmatism its guiding principle.

This group represented the pick of the Russian intellect. Talent, culture, deep thought and critical analysis, all these were dosed out to a nicety as if by a *cordon bleu* chef of an intellectual feast. One quality seemed to be wanting: the capacity to organise the artistic movement into a force.

Enter an exuberant Diaghilev

In the autumn of 1890 a youth of 18 was introduced to the Pickwickians. He was accepted on sufferance, for they were selective. He did not seem to take much interest either in painting or in his university studies. They thought him provincial, loud, exuberant. Diaghilev came to Petersburg to study singing and composition. These and the theatre seemed to absorb him. He failed in both his pursuits, music and singing; this failure opened the way for his true vocation.

The part he subsequently played in the conquering progress of the Russian artistic renaissance at home and abroad deserves a better name than merely that of a supreme organiser. By virtue of his unerring judgment of the intrinsic values in art, he became a supreme arbiter, be it of music, painting or ballet.

But how did this attractive but uncouth boy, the "raw youth" of the early days, become the undisputed leader of the creative artists, the legislator of their future policy? The inherent traits of his personality, the background of his early youth and the turn of apprenticeship he served will provide the answer.

Impatience with a lesser understanding than their own was never a failing of Russian artists and intellectuals. They took pride in educating those around them. Diaghilev could not have found a better mentor than Alexander Benois. Whoever had the good luck of having been guided by Benois through a museum deemed himself the richer for the experience. For all his profound knowledge of painting there was not a touch of pedantry, none of the homely language unembarrassing to a diffident layman. "Sink me! What a volcano under this polished surface" (before a Bronzino). "Never did the blackish tints

# of a Genius

by TAMARA KARSAVINA

of Sodoma serve him better; look how it sets off Roxana's drapery. By golly, there is a Thyrian pink for you!" By way of criticism he might ejaculate before a portrait, more in sorrow than in anger, "Oh you miserable, you double-dyed rascal, what of the bone structure!?"

The stimulus that Benois passed on with his knowledge was precisely what Diaghilev needed at the time. Once he became interested in anything, he espoused its cause wholeheartedly. What had seemed at the beginning his inertia of mind was, in fact, an asset of Diaghilev's intuitive and, at the same time practical, talent. All through his life's work he searched for selective knowledge. That which his mind needed he absorbed eagerly and pursued further, rejecting the bulk of knowledge extraneous to his purpose.

Diaghilev further broadened his understanding by studious visits to the museums, studios and exhibitions abroad. From now on his discrimination of painting never played him false. The probation was over. He was received into the circle as a full-fledged member.

It was also Benois, the enthusiastic balletomane, who revealed the beauty and the latent possibilities of ballet to Diaghilev. The admiration of the two friends for the Imperial Ballet with its brilliant technique, its dramatic plot and its constellation of superlative dancers was not unqualified. As yet, except for the initiative of the Director Vsevolojsky who had commissioned Tchaikovsky and Glazunov to write the music for *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Raymonda* respectively, the ballet stood isolated from its sister arts; its scenery as well was usually entrusted to competent artisans. Ballet as a vehicle for all its component parts, a spectacle in which dance, music and decors each would give of their best—this was the prophetic vision of the new artistic movement.

Connoisseur before impresario

In anything that interested him Diaghilev acquired a competence easily and rapidly. He was a connoisseur of ballet before he became its impresario. Eventually his short-lived but sensational collaboration with Prince Wolkonsky, the successor of Vsevolojsky, made him for a time a familiar figure in the theatre. His looks caused much fluttering of hearts in our midst; the white lock in his dark hair earned him the nickname of "Chinchilla." In the wings a silly little doggerel, set to a tune from *Esmeralda,* was often hummed:

"I just became aware
That the chinchilla's there,
And greatly do I fear
My steps will go wrong—oh dear."

Soon after 1890 the Pickwickians went into action; the man whom his friends had formerly reproached with laziness became their energetic leader.

I remember an old Russian emigrant in Paris watching Diaghilev during the preparation for the first season at the Châtelet. Rows of seats were being carried away to enlarge the orchestra pit. Through the hammering of the carpenters, between shouted orders, Diaghilev carried on an informal and wholly amiable press conference, turning now and then towards the stage to answer Fokine's infuriated protests with an airy: "Carry on." This was impressive, but when the long trestles covered with damask cloth suddenly appeared on the stage, the waiters from Larue serving the company with an excellent repast, the old emigrant exclaimed: "Peter the Great! That is what he is." Emotional as this outburst may seem, it was not wholly irrelevant. The will for which no difficulty was too great, the practical sense and the immense daring of Diaghilev were not to be found in any of his contemporaries.

It is doubtful whether the best of the creative talent of Russia would have won their victory so rapidly had it not been for Diaghilev's organising genius.

The first exhibition of the group, by now greatly strengthened by its numerous adherents, had a sensational if controversial success—as had everything that Diaghilev did. But whether friend or foe of the new movement, everyone stood in amazement at Diaghilev's magnificent showmanship. To provide a proper background for the pictures Diaghilev draped the walls of the huge hall of the Academy of Arts with pleated cloth, covering the permanent Academy canvases.

The groups's organ *Mir Iskustva* begun in 1908, was an event of paramount importance in the history of Russian art. The inception of it—a few men in their shirt-sleeves happily huddled together in a small room of a flat—stands in charming contrast to the mighty stir the journal created. Polemics raged round it, but its influence spread like wildfire even to the placid officialdom of the Imperial Theatres.

Without the movement headed by *Mir Iskustva* there might not have been the Ballets Russes such as Europe first knew them. The new artistic values, the principles of theatrical production based on the intrinsic merit of each component art, had been first established by it. Besides, the art of Benois and Bakst had a strong strain of "theatre"; both loved ballet, both had been given the chance to put their ideas into practice in their respective productions at the Imperial Theatre of *Armide* and *La Fée des Poupées* respectively. In the young Fokine, Benois found a choreographer capable of embodying his ideas.

The period of activity following on that of youthful effervescence was the finishing school of Diaghilev's genius. The technique of organisation and the value of collaborative work, both learned in this school, left nothing of an amateur in the future impresario of the Ballets Russes. "Impresario" seems a misnomer for a man of Diaghilev's calibre. The commercial spirit was altogether absent from his enterprise. In fact, he remained supremely regardless of the cost of his productions provided that he had the best in artistic quality.

Hard school of adversity

He had learnt, too, in another, harder school, the school of adversity. It needed exceptional tenacity and uncommon resilience to cope with the obstacles strewn in his path. Opposition of official circles nipped in the bud his career at the Imperial Theatres, a career that had shown such great promise. Disapproval of the Court nearly wrecked his brilliant achievement, the exhibition of Russian portraits in the Tauride Palace. Disaster seemed imminent when a promised subsidy for his first Paris season did not materialise. Even the resources of his own remarkable personality might not have carried him through these and the ever-recurring crises of his career had he not had devoted friends. (Regarded with distrust by many, he knew how to make friends). He had a way with him—his irresistible charm.

Alexander Benois on the steps of the Tate Gallery. Photo: Duncan Melvin

During Diaghilev's probation with the Pickwickians they often blamed him for what they thought was his snobbery. In after time they realised that his eagerness to make personal contacts with artists, authors, musicians, was a part of his desire to understand the workings of a creative mind. His subsequent insight into people, his power of persuasion, had their roots in his "appetite for people." Divination, the transcendent quality of his intellect, was born through his ability to get under people's skins. He discovered talent in its embryo. While not a great reader of literature, he garnered his wisdom from the book of life.

His artistic education could not have been better directed than by Benois and his circle. What he made of it was due to his inherent qualities and to the spacious background of his early upbringing.

His family, of a good lineage and wealthy, had cultivated tastes. The framework of unhurried existence set no limits to the exercise of their love for music. In later years, afraid as he was of appearing sentimental, Diaghilev would sometimes remember with a tinge of nostalgia the untroubled Castalian spring he drank of in his youth.

Rides to the neighbours to sing duets, impromptu performances of operas by the family circle . . . music was as natural an expression to his family as speech.

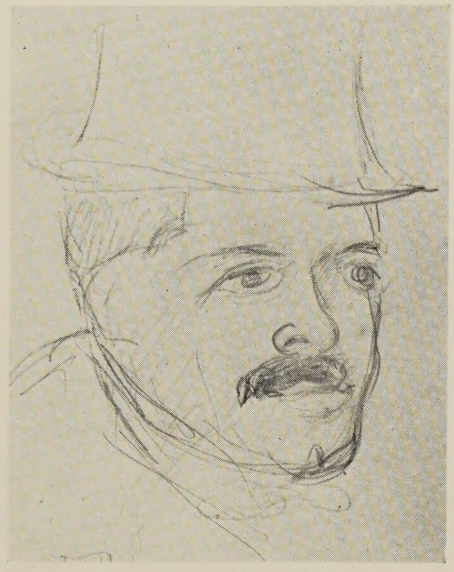
Education and experience did canalise his aspirations and refine his taste; his undying, unflagging passion for art was innate. It had been first awakened by music, later it found outlet through various channels.

His life was harrassed, beset with difficulties—one unending struggle—the clear-cut inner pattern of it amazingly felicitous. His personal gifts, his upbringing, the right milieu he fell in with—all those were the steps of a ladder leading him undeviatingly to his great achievements.

The Achievement

A chronological survey of the various branches of art which Diaghilev brought to Western Europe. Although his name is mentioned but rarely, it should be remembered that it was due to his taste and enterprise that all these great people were brought together. His was the true genius behind every production.

In order to emphasise the immensity of this array, we have put the various artists' names in capitals the first time they appear in an important capacity with the Diaghilev organisation.



A drawing of Diaghilev by the great Russian singer, Feodor Chaliapin. The drawing was made on the back of a menu in a Paris restaurant.
Collection, Madame Nicolas (niece of Léon Bakst)

ART EXHIBITIONS

1906

DIAGHILEV brought the first Exhibition of Russian Art to western Europe. In the Paris Salon d'Automne were seen a survey of two centuries of Russian art, including a collection of ancient icons. The most important aspect of the exhibition was that it showed the work of many contemporary Russian artists, some of whom later became the principal designers of ballet and completely revolutionised the whole conception of theatre design. Among those represented were: ANISFELD, LEON BAKST, ALEXANDER BENOIS, DOBOUSINSKY, KOROVINE, ROERICH, SEROV, SUDEIKIN. The exhibition was later taken to Berlin and Venice.

CONCERTS OF MUSIC

1907

CONCERTS of Russian Music Through the Ages in Paris. Conductors included: Kikisch, Rimsky-Korsakov, Felix Blumenfeldt, Rachmaninoff, Chevillard and Glazounoff.

Composers represented were: Glinka (excerpts from *Russlan and Ludmila*, *Kamarinskaya*), Rimsky-Korsakov (*Christmas Eve*, *Night on the Triglav Mountain*, excerpts from *Snow Maiden*, *Tsar Sultan*, *Sadko*, *Mlada*), Tchaikovsky (Second and Fourth Symphonies, excerpt from *The Witch*), Borodin (excerpts from *Prince Igor*), Mussorgsky (*Trepak*, *Song of the Flea*, excerpts from *Boris Godunov* and *Khovantchina*), Taneyev (Second Symphony), Liadov (*Eight Folk Songs* and *Baba Yaga*), Scriabin (Piano Concerto and Second Symphony), Rachmaninoff (Second Piano Concerto and Spring Symphony), Glazounoff (Second Symphony and Symphonic Impressions), Liapunov (Piano Concerto), Cui (excerpt from *William Radcliffe*).

Although the work of some of these composers was then known but slightly outside Russia, the impact of these concerts on a western audience was tremendous. Today there is hardly a concert without one of these composers being represented.

OPERA

1908

PRODUCTION of Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov* at the Paris Opéra. Chaliapin in the title role. Settings designed by Golovin and Jouon, the fourth scene by Alexander Benois.

The first production outside Russia of Mussorgsky's great opera was a musical event of the first magnitude, not only for the magnificence of the work as a whole but also for the singing of that greatest of all Russian singers—Feodor Chaliapin.

The success of these exhibitions of painting, of the concerts of Russian music and of this opera, led to the seasons of ballet which followed.

BALLET

1909

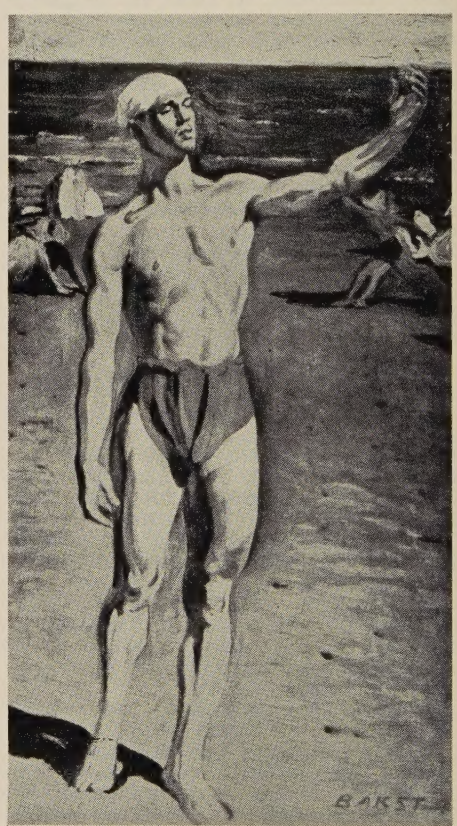
Le Pavillon d'Armide

Choreography, MICHEL FOKINE. Music, TCHEREPNINE. Designs, ALEXANDER BENOIS. The St. Petersburg cast in 1907 included PAVLOVA, GERDT and NIJINSKY. The first Western European production of 1909 had MORDKIN, NIJINSKY, KARSAVINA and FEDOROVA in the cast.

The work has an importance to history in that it was the first of the short works which showed a quite new slant on the art of ballet to Western Europe. It marks the beginning of the fusion between the arts that go to make ballet which was characteristic of everything that Diaghilev presented until the end of his life.

In it, Benois' tuition of Diaghilev (see Karsavina's article) started to bear fruit. This ballet brought the revolutionary approach to choreography of Fokine before a new public. In addition, dancers were seen for the first time such as had never been dreamt of before.

Tamara Karsavina in Fokine's Les Sylphides. *One of the first ballets to recapture the idiom of the 19th century Romantic Ballet. The work has remained as one of the great romantic classics of the world. It has continually been reproduced since its first performance.*
Photo: Schneider



Nijinsky on the beach in 1909. A portrait by Léon Bakst.
Collection, Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss. On loan to the Museum of Modern Art in New York

Prince Igor

Choreography, Fokine. Music, ALEXANDER BORODIN. Designs, NICHOLAS ROERICH. The cast included SOPHIA FEDOROVA HELEN SMIRNOVA and ADOLPH BOLM.

These Polovtsian dances were a complete contrast to Fokine's previous ballet. The wild abandon of Asiatic rhythms and steps were different from anything ever seen by a Western European public. The music of Borodin was

# of a Genius

almost unknown outside Russia and with the designs of Roerich a new feeling for primitive and barbaric life was brought to the stage.

Les Sylphides
Choreography, Fokine. Music, CHOPIN. Designs, Benois. Cast included Pavlova, Karsavina, Nijinsky.

Here was yet another side of Fokine's genius —19th-century romanticism. The fine use of Chopin's music combined with the wonderful patterns of Fokine's choreography and Benois' moonlit decor made it the essence of the Romantic ballet. It remained in the repertoire for the whole of Diaghilev's life and in the repertoire of almost every company since.

Cléopâtre
Choreography, Fokine. Music, ARENSKY with additions. Designs, LEON BAKST. In the cast were Pavlova, IDA RUBENSTEIN, Fokine, Karsavina and Nijinsky.

This was the first of the great oriental spectacles which became such a prominent feature in all branches of the theatre before the 1914 war. The ballet also introduced the work of Bakst to Western Europe. This designer played a vital part in shaping the trend of stage designing in the 20th-century.

1910

Le Carnaval
Choreography, Fokine. Music, SCHUMANN. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Karsavina, VERA FOKINA, LUDMILLA SCHOLLAR, BRONISLAVA NIJINSKA, Nijinsky, Bolm, ENRICO CECCHETTI.

Fokine's choreography showed another side of 19th-century romanticism—the lighter side which so perfectly reflected Schumann's music. Karsavina and Nijinsky have never been equalled as Columbine and Harlequin.

Schéhérazade
Choreography, Fokine. Music, RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Ida Rubenstein, Nijinsky, ALEXIS BULGAKOV, Cecchetti.

Design by Léon Bakst for Nijinsky's Harlequin costume in Fokine's Le Carnaval.

A further development of the oriental spectacle started with *Cléopâtre*. Not only was *Schéhérazade* remarkable for its voluptuousness and the performance by its principal dancers but for the effect it had on every branch of art. It effected the plays in the straight theatre, fashion, poetry, interior decoration. This influence survived World War I and continued on through the 'twenties.

Giselle (revival)
Choreography, CORALLI. Music, ADAM. Designs, Benois. Cast included: Karsavina, Nijinsky.

In spite of the wonderful performances by the principal dancers, this revival was discarded from the repertoire because it was—in 1910—considered out of date.

Tamara Karsavina as Columbine in Fokine's Le Carnaval. *Photo: Bassano*

L'Oiseau de Feu
Choreography, Fokine. Music IGOR STRAVINSKY. Designs, GOLOVINE. Cast included: Karsavina, Fokine, Fokina, Cecchetti.

Apart from the fairy-tale fantasy of this ballet, its chief importance is that it was the first ballet for which Igor Stravinsky composed the score. In presenting this composer to the world, Diaghilev set the form that twentieth-century music was to take. Karsavina's interpretation of the title role was an outstanding creation which has yet to be equalled (today she is teaching it to Margot Fonteyn). Golovine, who designed the settings and costumes, except for that of the Firebird and the Tsarevna which were by Bakst, was a famous designer from the Russian Imperial Theatres. In 1926 new designs were made by Nathalie Goncharova.

1911

Le Spectre de la Rose
Choreography, Fokine. Music, WEBER. Designs, Bakst. Dancers: Karsavina and Nijinsky.

Fokine's realisation of Théophile Gautier's poem was yet another essay in romanticism upon which VAUDOYER based his libretto. It was one of the first complete ballets for two people and was immortalised by its two creators.

Tamara Karsavina in Fokine's Narcisse.

Narcisse
Choreography, Folkine. Music, Tcherepnine Designs, Bakst. Dancers included: Karsavina, Nijinsky, Bronislava Nijinska.

Fokine's first ballet to use a Greek mythological background. This was a trend that was to be used continuously in the later Diaghilev repertoire.

Sadko
Choreography, Fokine. Music, Rimsky-Korsakov. Designs, B. ANISFELDT. The Kingdom-under-the-Sea ballet scenes from Rimsky-Korsakov's opera.

Le Lac des Cygnes
Choreography, PETIPA. Music, TCHAIKOVSKY. Designs, KOROVINE and Golovine. Dancers: MATILDE KCHESSINSKA, Nijinsky.

Today, when acts from *Swan Lake* are in almost every repertoire, it seems curious to think that until 1911 the ballet was unknown in Western Europe. The condensed two-act version was given at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in October of this year with the great ballerina of Imperial Russia in the Odette role.

Petrouchka
Choreography, Fokine. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, Benois. Cast included: Karsavina, Nijinsky, ORLOV, Cecchetti.

This story of a fair puppet remains the finest example of how the various arts can be fused to make perfect ballet.

1912

Le Dieu Bleu
Choreography, Fokine. Music, REYNALDO HAHN. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Karsavina, Nijinsky, NELIDOVA, FROHMAN.

This work based on a Hindoo legend will probably go down to ballet history as being the first work in which JEAN COCTEAU collaborated with Diaghilev—he was responsible for the libretto. Cocteau was closely connected with the company for the remainder of its existence and his influence kept the repertoire in line with every new trend.

Thamar
Choreography, Fokine. Music, BALAKIREV. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Karsavina, Bolm.

Self portrait by Jean Cocteau. Collection, Madame Nicolas.

This dramatic Georgian story was almost the last of the big oriental dramatic spectacles which formed such an important part of the early Diaghilev repertoire.

L'Apres-Midi d'un Faune
Choreography, Nijinsky. Music, DEBUSSY. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Nijinsky.

For the first time in the history of the Diaghilev Ballet, a choreographer other than Fokine created a ballet. This first work by Nijinsky showed a new trend in choreography with the dances appearing to be almost two-dimensional.

Daphnis and Chloe
Choreography, Fokine. Music, MAURICE RAVEL. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Karsavina, Nijinsky, Bolm.

The ballet marks the debut of Ravel as a ballet composer and was a landmark in French music from which most French composers have drawn inspiration. The work was revived in January, 1924, for the debut of ANTON DOLIN. LYDIA SOKOLOVA replaced Karsavina.

1913

Jeux
Choreography, Nijinsky. Music, Debussy. Designs, Bakst. Cast included: Karsavina, LUDMILLA SCHOLLAR, Nijinsky.

Nijinsky's second essay in choreography was mainly notable for the fine score of Debussy which was also his last commissioned work.

Le Sacre du Printemps
Choreography, Nijinsky. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, Roerich. Principal dancer: M. PILTZ.

This archaic ritual caused one of the greatest scandals in the theatre. The first performance was hardly allowed to proceed owing to the tumult. The idea and also Stravinsky's score caused a great shock to the audience of the time owing to its harsh brutality.

In 1921, the ballet was revived with choreography by LEONIDE MASSINE and Lydia Sokolova in the role of the Chosen Virgin.

La Tragédie de Salomé
Choreography, BORIS ROMANOV. Music, FLORENT SCHMIDT. Designs, S. SOUDEIKINE. Principal dancer: Karsavina.

The first Diaghilev ballet on a biblical theme.

Papillons
Choreography, Fokine. Music, Schumann. Scenery, M. DOBOUJINSKY. Costumes, Bakst. Cast included, Karsavina, Schollar.

Another of Fokine's essays in romanticism in the style of *Carnaval.*

La Légende de Joseph
Choreography, Fokine. Music, RICHARD STRAUSS. Costumes, Bakst. Scenery, JOSE-MARIA SERT. Cast included: M. KOUZNETSOVA, LEONIDE MASSINE.

Based on the biblical story of Potiphar's wife by HUGO VON HOFMANNSTAL, the work was more of an elaborate mime play than a ballet. In it, Massine made his first appearance before the public.

Le Coq d'Or
Choreography, Fokine. Music, Rimsky-Korsakov. Designs, NATHALIE GONCHAROVA. Cast included: Karsavina, JERIERSKA, Bulgarkov, Cecchetti, KOVALSKI.

This choreographic opera was historic for many reasons. It was the first attempt at combining singing and dancing—the condensed version of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera used the chorus on each side of the stage with the singers duplicated by the dancers. It introduced a brilliant new designer in Goncharova.

In 1937 the work was revived by the De Basil company but without the singers.

Le Rossignol
Choreography, BORIS ROMANOV. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, Benois.

The dances in this Stravinsky opera were incidental. It marks the first production of opera proper by the Diaghilev company.

Midas
Choreography, Fokine. Music, MAXIMILIEN STEINBERG. Designs, Doboujinsky. Cast included: Karsavina, Bolm, Frohman.

This mythological comedy was the last work that Fokine was to mount for the company.

1915

Le Soleil de Nuit
Choreography, Massine. Music, Rimsky-Korsakov. Designs, MICHEL LARIONOV. Cast included: Massine, N. ZVEREV.

Massine's first essay in choreography. Larionov's first stage designs. LYDIA SOKOLOVA and VERA NEMCHINOVA joined the company this year.

1916

Till Eulenspiegel
Choreography, Nijinsky. Music, Richard Strauss. Designs, ROBERT EDMOND JONES. Cast included: F. REVALLES, Nijinsky.

Nijinsky's last work for the company and never seen by Diaghilev as it was only given in America. It was the first ballet designed by the great American designer, Robert Edmond Jones.

Las Meninas
Choreography, Massine. Music, GABRIEL FAURE. Scenery, CARLO SOCRATE. Costumes, Jose-Maria Sert.
Cast included: Sokolova, KHOKHLOVA, Massine, WOIZIKOVSKY.

Suite of Spanish court dances inspired by the fact that the company was working in Spain at the time.

Kikimora
Choreography, Massine. Music, LIADOV. Designs, Larionov. Cast included: SHABELSKA, IDZIKOVSKY.

Russian fairy tale later enlarged into *Les Contes Russes.*

1917

Fireworks
Music, Stravinsky. Designs, M. BALLO.

Nijinsky in the title role of Le Dieu Bleu.

Ludmilla Schollar, Nijinsky and Karsavina in Jeux. *This second choreographic work by Nijinsky used a game of tennis as the background for the personal intrigues of the players. It was also said to be based on some personal incident in Diaghilev's life.*

A visual symphonic poem staged by Diaghilev himself, using no dancers.

Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur
Choreography, Massine. Music, DOMENICO SCARLATTI. Design, Bakst. Cast included: LYDIA LOPOKOVA, LUBOV TCHERNICHEVA, Madame CECCHETTI, Massine, Cecchetti, Idzikovsky, Woizikovsky.

This choreographic version of a Goldoni comedy has music of Scarlatti that had been lost but was rediscovered by Diaghilev and brilliantly arranged by VINCENZO TOMMASINI.

Les Contes Russes
Choreography, Massine. Music, Liadov. Designs, Larionov. Cast included : Tchernicheva, Sokolova, Woizikovsky, JAZVINSKY, Idzikovsky.

An enlarged version in several scenes of *Kikimora* (given in 1916).

Parade
Choreography, Massine. Music, ERIK SATIE. Designs, PABLO PICASSO. Cast included: LYDIA LOPOKOVA, Shabelska, Massine.

This work was the forerunner of the trend that the Diaghilev ballets were to take until the

Leonide Massine as the young Joseph in La Légende de Joseph.

end—namely using *avant-garde* painters and ideas and modern French composers. Cocteau's story of a fair ground was typical of French thought. Picasso introduced cubism into ballet. Satie was a member of Les Six, the first group of 20th-century French composers.

1919

La Boutique Fantasque
Choreography, Massine. Music, GIACOMO ROSSINI. Designs, ANDRE DERAIN. Principal dancers: Lopokova, Massine.

Diaghilev discovered some forgotten music of Rossini which was wonderfully orchestrated by OTTORINO RESPIGI. The introduction of the painter, Derain, brought yet another fine designer to the theatre. *Boutique*, together with *Petrouchka*, remain the best of the dolls-coming-alive ballets.

Le Tricorne
Choreography, Massine. Music, MANUEL DE FALLA. Designs, Picasso. Cast included: Karsavina, Massine, Woizikovsky.

The story of MARTINEZ SIERRA (based on a story of Alarçon) introduced a purely Spanish theme into ballet. Massine's stylisation of Spanish steps together with Picasso's masterly décor made the work as much an entity as *Petrouchka*. It was also Falla's first work for ballet.

1920

Le Chant du Rossignol
Choreography, Massine. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, MATISSE. Cast included: Karsavina, Sokolova.

A one-act ballet adapted from Stravinsky's opera *Le Rossignol* (1914). It was the impressionist painter Matisse's first work for ballet and his only ballet for Diaghilev.

The work was revived in 1925 with new choreography by GEORGE BALANCHINE to present the child ALICIA MARKOVA in the title role.

Pulcinella
Choreography, Massine. Music, PERGOLESI. Designs, Picasso. Cast included: Karsavina, Tchernicheva, Nemchinova, Massine, Idzikovsky, Cecchetti.

In the same way that Diaghilev discovered the forgotten music of Rossini and Scarlatti, so he also unearthed this Pergolesi music which Stravinsky arranged. The ballet was also one of the first works ever to be based on a pure Commedia dell'Arte theme.

Le Astuzie Femminili
Choreography, Massine. Music, DOMENICO CIMAROSA. Designs, Jose-Maria Sert. Dancers included: Karsavina, Tchernicheva, Nemchinova, Sokolova, Idzikovsky, Woizikovsky, NOVAK.

Yet another opera with incidental dances. Massine also arranged the movements for the singers.

1921

Chout
Choreography, Larionov and T. SLAVINSKY. Music, SERGE PROKOFIEV. Designs, Larionov. Cast included: CATERINE DEVILLIER, SLAVINSKY, Jazvinsky.

This Russian legend introduced a new choreographer, Slavinsky, and must also have been one of the first occasions when a designer took an active part in the creation of the dances—as did Larionov. It also introduced the first Soviet composer, Prokofiev, to Western Europe.

Cuadro Flamenco
Designed by Picasso.
Dancers included: MARIA DALBAICIN, LA RUBIA DE JEREZ, LA GABRIELITA DEL GORROTIN, LA LOPEZ, EL TEJERO, EL MORENO.

Probably the first time that the great art of Flamenco was seen outside Spain as a theatrical production. It was certainly the first introduction of Flamenco to England. Since then England has become the country that most admires the art of the Spanish gypsies.

The Sleeping Princess
Choreography, Petipa. Music, Tchaikovsky. Designs. Bakst.
Dancers in the Aurora role: OLGA SPESSIVTZIEVA, VERA TREFILOVA, LUBOV EGOROVA, Lydia Lopokova.
Other dancers included: CARLOTTA BRIANZA, Nemchinova, Sokolova, FELIA DUBROVSKA, Tchernicheva, BRONISLAVA NIJINSKA, PIERRE VLADIMIROV, ANATOLE VILZAK, Idzikovsky, Woizikovsky.

Only given in England, this first full-length production of a great Russian classic was a landmark in ballet history. Unfortunately it came too much in advance of its time for great popularity with the public. The great ballerinas of Russia—Spessivtzieva, Trefilova and Egorova made their debut in England. Not until over twenty years later has this master work really been appreciated outside Russia.

The designs by Bakst, his last for Diaghilev, were of unparalleled magnificence.

1922

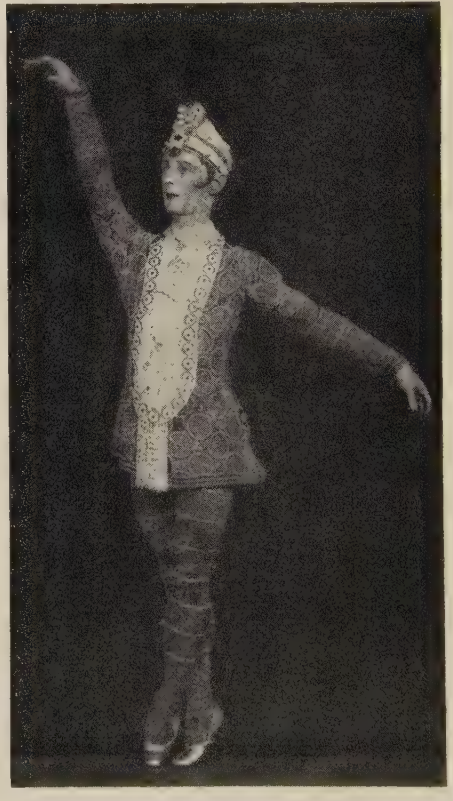
Le Renard
Choreography, Bronislava Nijinska. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, Goncharova. Cast included: Nijinska, Idzikovsky, Jazvinsky.

The first choreographic work of Nijinsky's sister who was to mount several ballets for

Lydia Lopokova as the Young Girl in Le Spectre de la Rose.

Diaghilev and who became the choreographer most reflecting the idiom of the 'twenties. The ballet also used songs combined with dancing.

Revived in 1929 with choreography by SERGE LIFAR when acrobats "doubled" the dancers.



Stanislas Idzikovsky as the Bluebird from the last act of Tchaikovsky's The Sleeping Princess.

Vera Nemchinova and Anton Dolin in Nijinska's Les Biches. *The ballet was a witty commentary on the form of entertainment known as the house-party. In fact it was under that title*—The House Party—*that it was known in England. The role of the Girl in Blue (or the blue Page Boy) was created by Nemchinova and was one of her outstanding modern roles.*

Aurora's Wedding
A one act version of Tchaikovsky-Petipa *The Sleeping Princess*. Benois adapted and re-designed some of the costumes. This one-act classic was more to the taste of the time and it remained popular until the end.

1923

Les Noces
Choreography, Nijinska. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, Goncharova.
Cast included: Tchernicheva, Dubrovska, Woizikovsky.
A Russian wedding using modern mass movement. The ballet was the forerunner of the mass movement works, so popular in the 'twenties and early 'thirties.

1924

Les Tentations de la Bergère
Choreography, Nijinska. Music, MONTE-CLAIR. Designs, JUAN GRIS.
Cast included: Nemchinova, Tchernicheva, Woizikovsky, Vilzak.
This eighteenth-century pastiche was mainly interesting in that it introduced the Spanish painter, Juan Gris.

Les Biches
Choreography, Nijinska. Music, FRANCIS POULENC. Designs, MARIE LAURENCIN.
Cast included: Nemchinova, Nijinska, Tchernicheva, Sokolova, Vilzak, Woizikovsky.
A *chic* and witty commentary on contemporary behaviour. Both composer, Poulenc, and designer, Laurencin, did their first work for Diaghilev and through it reached international fame.

Cimarosiana
Cast included: Nemchinova, Tchernicheva, Sokolova, Idzikovsky, Woizikovsky.
A one-act version of the dances from the last act of Cimarosa's opera, *Le Astuzie Femminili* (1920).

Les Facheux
Choreography, Nijinska. Music, GEORGES AURIC. Designs, GEORGES BRAQUE.
Cast included: Tchernicheva, Vilzak, DOLIN.
This ballet, based on a Molière comedy by BORIS KOCHNO, introduced to the public a man who was to have the greatest influence on the latter part of Diaghilev's creative life. As secretary and adviser, Kochno was responsible for the librettos of many works as well as interesting Diaghilev in every new trend in modern art. This ballet also brought the painter, Braque, into the theatre.
As an 18th - century dandy, the British dancer, Anton Dolin, had his first important role—he danced a solo on *pointe*.

Le Train Bleu
Choreography, Nijinska. Music, DARIUS MILHAUD. Scenery, H. LAURENS. Costumes, CHANEL. Drop Curtain, Picasso. Cast included: Nijinska, Sokolova, Dolin, Woizikovsky.
The second of Nijinska's ballets on contemporary behaviour, this time on the beaches of the South of France. The work was devised by Cocteau. Dolin's acrobatic role as Le Beau Gosse was the outstanding thing in the ballet. A famous couturier was used for the first time in ballet.
ALEXANDRE DANILOVA, ALICIA MARKOVA and GEORGE BALANCHINE joined the company in this year.

1925

Zéphire et Flore
Choreography, Massine. Music, VLADIMIR DUKELSKY. Designs, Georges Braque.
Dancers included: ALICE NIKITINA, Dolin, SERGE LIFAR.
Another 18th-century pastiche which brought Dukelsky (later called Vernon Duke) into the theatre.

Les Matelots
Choreography, Massine. Music, Auric. Designs, PEDRO PRUNA.
Cast included: Nemchinova, Sokolova, Woizikovsky, Lifar, Slavinsky.
The first of two ballets designed by the Spanish painter, Pruna. Also one of the first ballets—the libretto was again by Kochno—about three sailors on shore leave.

1925

Barabau
Choreography, George Balanchine. Music, VITTORIO RIETI. Designs, UTRILLO.
Cast included: Woizikovsky, Lifar, TATIANA CHAMIE.
Apart from a re-arrangement of *Rossignol*, this was Balanchine's first creation for the company. Also the first ballet music by Rieti (another member of Les Six) and the first time that the painter Utrillo designed for the theatre (the only time for Diaghilev).

1926

Romeo et Juliette
Choreography, Nijinska; for *entr'acte*, Balanchine. Music, CONSTANT LAMBERT. Designs, MAX ERNST and JOAN MIRO.
Dancers included: Karsavina, Lifar, Slavinsky.
The first time that surrealism was used in Russian ballet; the first work in the Diaghilev repertoire to be composed by an Englishman.

La Pastorale
Choreography, Balanchine. Music, Auric. Designs, Pruna.
Cast included: Dubrovska, Danilova, Lifar, Woizikovsky.
The main interest in this work is that a bicycle played the principal part.

Jack-in-the-box
Choreography, Balanchine. Music, Satie. Designs, Derain.
Cast included: Danilova, Tchernicheva, Doubrovska, Idzikovsky.

The Triumph of Neptune
Choreography, Balanchine. Music, LORD BERNERS. Designs, PRINCE SHERVASHIDZE after Webb and Pollock penny-plain-twopence-coloured theatrical prints.
Cast included: Danilova, Sokolova, Tchernicheva, Lifar, Balanchine.
The first ballet in the Diaghilev repertoire with a purely English theme suggested by SACHEVERELL SITWELL. Lord Berners' score for this ballet, on 19th-century toy theatre libretto, was his first for the theatre.

La Chatte
Choreography, Balanchine. Music, HENRI SAUGUET. Constructions, GABO and PEVSNER.
Cast included: Spessivtzieva, Lifar.
The first time that the Soviet trend of Constructivism was used in a ballet outside Russia. This Aesop fable in a modern idiom used scenery of talc and American cloth for the first time. Sauguet's first composition for the theatre.

Mercure
Choreography, Massine. Music, Satie. Designs, Picasso.
Cast included: VERA PETROVA, Massine, LISSANEVITCH.
The work amounted to plastic poses around the constructions of Picasso.

Le Pas d'Acier
Choreography, Massine. Music, Prokofiev. Designs, G. YAKOULOV.
Cast included: Danilova, Tchernicheva, Petrova, Massine, Lifar, Woizikovsky.

Lubov Tchernicheva in Fokine's Cléopâtre. *Photo: Maurice Seymour*

The Diaghilev company on tour. Seen at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, are (from L to R): Tchernicheva, Mr. King, Markova, Mrs. Marks (Markova's mother), Troussevitch, Doubrovska, Woizikovsky, Danilova, Lifar, Desormière (conductor), Balanchine.

Another work using Soviet constructivism. One of the first works in which the dancers appeared as part of a machine. This started a trend in machine ballets which were later to be seen in most repertoires and also revues in the 'twenties and 'thirties.

1928

Ode

Choreography, Massine. Music, NICHOLAS NABOKOV. Designs, PAVEL TCHELICHEV and PIERRE CHARBONNIER.
Cast included: IRA BELIAMINA, Dubrovska, Nikitina, Massine, Lifar, EFIMOV.

The work used projections and different forms of dance presentation. It marked the debut of Tchelichev as a stage designer.

Apollon Musagète

Choreography, Balanchine. Music, Stravinsky. Designs, ANDRE BAUCHANT.
Cast included: Danilova, Tchernicheva, Doubrovska, Lifar.

A new classical trend in Stravinsky's music. The debut of the painter, Bauchant, as a stage designer. A fine performance by Lifar as Apollo. One of the most beautiful of the last phase of Diaghilev ballets.

The Gods go a-begging

Choreography, Balanchine. Music, HANDEL arranged SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. Décor, Bakst's setting from *Daphnis and Chloe*. Costumes, Juan Gris from *Les Tentations de la Bergère*.
Cast included: Danilova, Tchernicheva, Doubrovska, Woizikovsky, Tcherkass.

An 18th-century pastoral using some forgotten Handel music.

1929

Le Bal

Choreography, Balanchine. Music, Rieti. Designs, GEORGIO DE CHIRICO.
Cast included: Danilova, Doubrovska, P. LIPKOVSKA, Dolin, Woizikovsky, Balanchine, Lifar.

Another surrealist work which introduced the Italian painter, Chirico.

Le Fils Prodigue

Choreography, Balanchine. Music, Prokofiev. Designs, GEORGES ROUAULT.
Cast included: Doubrovska, Lifar, Woizikovsky, Dolin.

Another work on a biblical subject was the last ballet to be created for the Diaghilev company. It was the first work for the theatre of Rouault. The ballet had a sombre majesty which made it a unique experience in the theatre.

For the entire life of the Diaghilev Ballet, SERGE GRIGORIEV was the most faithful Regisseur for every work.

Alexandre Danilova as the Fairy Queen in Balanchine's The Triumph of Neptune.

England's Mite

by
POPPOEA VANDA

I FIRST saw the Diaghilev Ballet when I was a very small girl and for me it opened a door into a world of pure enchantment. Through that door lay all joy, all magic; it stood wide open and—for the price of a theatre ticket—anyone could go through.

Since 1929 the door has been gently, silently, almost stealthily closing. Is the dust of time steadily piling up behind it; are little winds of forgetfulness impelling it forward; or is some human agency relentlessly pushing it to for some nefarious reason? I do not know, but I often wonder.

I suppose it might be true that you cannot so easily overlook the deficiencies of what you have, if you are forever remembering that which you once had. Under such circumstances it would, of course, be advisable to do everything possible to encourage people to believe that there had never been anything better, if you could bring yourself to such a betrayal. To my great sorrow I have found that people connected with various ballet organisations do not care to be reminded of the wonderful Diaghilev Ballet and become really angry if it is suggested that what they have to offer is just a school treat compared with the Diaghilev Company.

Twenty-five years, a quarter of a century, have passed since the sudden death of Serge Diaghilev. With his passing, the company vanished overnight as is the way of all magical things; but the pioneer work which it did during the twenty years of its existence is directly responsible for the present popularity of ballet as an art form, and for the plethora of dance companies which have sprung up since its extinction.

In England today, dancers male and female, trained in the academic tradition, are ten a penny; the supply is vastly in excess of the demand. In the days of the Diaghilev Ballet Russe, English dancers were so rare that they were almost freaks. None the less, England was fortunate enough to be able to make her small contribution to the company.

Ninette de Valois, Ursula Moreton, Hilda Bewick and Dorothy Coxon were all entrusted with small solo parts, and I remember very clearly Vera Savina, a strong technical dancer with really remarkable elevation. The baby of the company was Alicia Markova who, but for the fact that she developed diphtheria, was to have appeared in Diaghilev's 1921-22 production of *The Sleeping Princess*. At that time she was a very tiny child and had she been able to appear she would, I imagine, have made a sensation; but her illness prevented her from showing just what a phenomenon she was at that age.

While reading a recent book on the Diaghilev Ballet I was shocked by the author's ungenerous and misleading references to that delightful English dancer Lydia Sokolova. No one reading the book would have any idea that, in the absence of the great Karsavina or some other guest artist, Sokolova was frequently the mainstay, the backbone of the Diaghilev company. In making my assertion I do her no more than justice.

She was primarily a great character dancer; but although she would not, I think, ever have claimed to be a classic dancer she could when necessary give a very creditable performance as the Cherry Blossom Fairy in *The Sleeping Princess* or as Columbine in *Carnaval*. She could, and did, take over anybody's roles at a moment's notice; her range was wide, and in giving at the very least a good performance of anything she undertook she was doing no more than was expected of her.

Today most performers seem content that their reputation shall rest on the interpretation of two or possibly three roles; but the Diaghilev dancers had to do whatever was asked of them and, moreover, it was taken for granted that they would do it well.

The English male members of the company were Errol Addison who, as a young man, possessed a prodigious technique, and Anton Dolin who had the honour of being the only non-Russian classic dancer ever to lead the great Diaghilev Ballet.

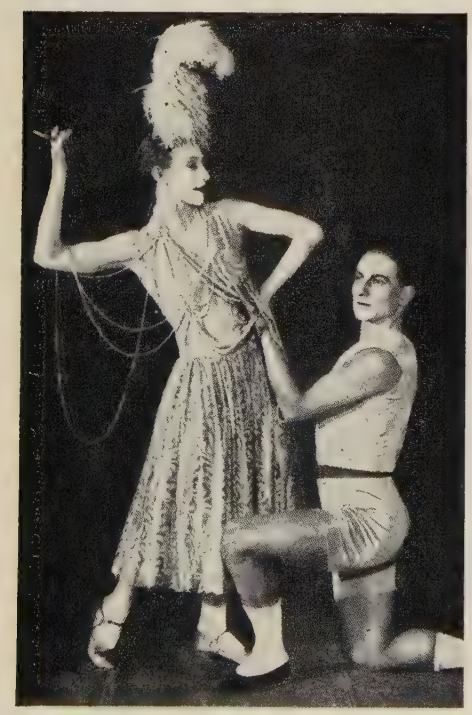
Diaghilev and Massine talking to a gardener. Drawing by Michel Larionov. Collection, Richard Buckle.

Recollections o

From the first English dancer to become a Diaghilev ballerina

THERE has been so much written of Diaghilev's achievements and his autocracy that it has become practically forgotten that he had an unusually gentle, sensitive and kindly side to his nature.

Year in and year out, he fed and supported painters, musicians and so on—many of whose names are now famous—often when he himself was far from affluent; rarely did he entertain less than six or eight people at his table to all of whom he acted as host.



Lydia Sokolova and Leon Woizikovsky in Les Biches.

It is known, I think, by very few people that he was a great lover of animals. At one time he had a bull-dog to which he was extremely devoted. As he knew that I also was a great animal lover, and often treated them when they were ill, he made me a present on the first night of *Le Sacre du Printemps* of a little dog complete with a lined basket and combs and brushes for its toilet.

He was heard to say, on more than one occasion, that he would have made a very good father. I remember that he used to love holding my little daughter in his arms; walking up and down with her and petting her. In Spain, during the first World War, we were stranded in Madrid with no engagements and no money. Not only were we dancers entirely without resources but he himself was also in a very difficult situation.

My daughter, who was ill, was ordered by the doctor to have a special prescription made up. I went to Diaghilev's hotel in desperation to ask him him for his advice as to where I could find some money for the medicine. He took me up to his bedroom and opened his wardrobe trunk from which he took a leather money-bag. He emptied it on the bed. From a pile of foreign coins, he separated the silver from the metal and gave me all the silver coins to go and sell for what I could get; at that moment he gave me all that he had and I shall never forget this.

In cases of illness he was always extremely concerned and kind; when I had an emergency operation in Paris just before the company was due to leave for the South of France he visited me several times and made a point of putting a telephone call through to the clinic at every stop on the way to Monte Carlo.

For these few personal memories alone, as well as for everything else he did for us, I shall always be profoundly grateful to our dear master and friend.

LYDIA SOKOLOVA

From the only British male dancer to become a star of the Diaghilev Ballet

A QUARTER of a century separates us from the day when the great creator of the Russian Ballet surrendered his restless soul to God. He rests in Venice, in the cemetery of San Michele among the cypresses which are reflected in the lagoon.

Someone has said that it would be opportune to erect over his grave the image of Terpischore bowed down in sadness. I do not think that only the muse of the dance weeps for him. His monument should include the other muses which symbolise the arts, since Diaghilev devoted his life to everything that was beautiful. With regard to ballet, his spirit still accompanies all the troupes of importance which inevitably bear the stamp of his tradition.

There is no performance of classical ballet where his name does not appear; there is no book of the dance or theatre that does not refer to him. The best dancers of the century talk with pride of having collaborated with him. The youth of today sees in the artistic heritage left by Diaghilev the spring of inspiration for professional artists in generations to come.

Who was Diaghilev that his name should have entered the history of the arts? Was he a musician, painter, choreographer or dancer? He was none of these things. Nevertheless all obeyed with religious submission; composers floundering in search of new themes, painters tortured by indefinite images, choreographers restless for the expressive form in the dance. All turned to him to solve their problems. He offered them everything—the ideas,

Anton Dolin in the unusual dance, for a male dancer, on pointe in Les Facheux.

the themes and even the inspiration. He corrected faults and found harmony among confused elements.

It was perhaps a unique case in the history of the arts that a man realised the artistic conception through his spirit without touching the substance itself, leaving to professionals the concrete and conclusive expression of the work.

Many people think of Diaghilev as being stern and arrogant but there was a softer sentimental side to his nature that was seen by those who knew him well. I remember when we were appearing at the London Coliseum in 1924, Diaghilev was sitting at the back of the stalls watching the performance when a telegram was handed to him. After the ballet he came back-stage, as he always did, and came straight to my dressing-room. He was quite white and seemed visibly shaken with tears in his eyes. The telegram said that Leon Bakst had died in Paris. I don't think I ever remember seeing him so moved. Though he and Bakst had parted on far from friendly terms after the production of *The Sleeping Princess* in

Appreciations

Most of which have been collected by ANTON DOLIN

1921, the death of his early collaborator affected him deeply.

His greatest joys in 1929, the last year of his life, were the fact that the company returned to Covent Garden for that last English season; that Karsavina danced with the company again in *Petrouchka*; that Olga Spessivtzieva was with the company; that Lydia Sokolova, beloved artist of Diaghilev, had such a triumph in *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

ANTON DOLIN

From the widow of Prince Serge Wolkonsky, Director of the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg

I WAS on a motor flight, in company with two friends Caro Alardi and Louis Gautier-Vignal through northern Italy visiting those smaller exquisite towns including Mantua where the following encounter occurred.

We had visited the town in the morning and after luncheon proceeded to the cathedral to see the especially famous Mantegna picture. There is a remarkable one, as I remember, in one of the chapels. In the semi-obscurity of the church, evidently like ourselves, or so we thought, taking advantage of the freshness in contrast with the torrid heat outside, we saw a large figure approaching. It was Serge Diaghilev.

He held in his hand a small red book, obviously a Baedeker. We joined in conversation and on my remarking that I met him for the first time *alone* (he was always surrounded by a small crowd, if not a big one, of admirers and disciples), he said with a smile, "I came on purpose alone, to enjoy the companionship of the famous Mantegna pictures. I feel well repaid in my solitude!"

And so it turned out that in the early morning, he had quietly caught a hot, dusty train from Venice to Mantua, unescorted, to renew his admiration for the great painter's pageantry. It was an interesting sidelight on his love of occasional serenity, in isolation, in his study of supreme art.

After a quite supper, Serge took the train back to Venice.

MARY, PRINCESS WOLKONSKY

From one of Diaghilev's greatest conductors

DEEPLY and without a doubt, I feel that Serge Diaghilev was the greatest influence in my life as an artist. His was a genius which drew toward him the finest of talent. His was a generosity of spirit which enabled those around him to develop their potentialities as he had so magnificently realised his own.

His infallible taste and aristocratic perception of all that was distinguished in music and painting has helped me, in these later years, in no small way in my own development as an interpreter and a performing artist.

PIERRE MONTEUX

From the first great designer to collaborate with Diaghilev

IN the circle of his friends Serge (Diaghilev) liked to boast of his descent, *de main gauche*, from Peter the Great. He hardly believed this family legend himself (possibly he had even invented it), but there is no doubt that he actually had in him *something* of Peter. When I was creating pictures and illustrations in which Peter the Great was the central figure I used involuntarily to imagine Seriozha—*toute proportion gardée*—not so much physically as morally.

In Diaghilev there was undoubtedly the inborn love of power, the mind that penetrated to the origin of all things (often without any actual knowledge of them), the capacity to gauge people's weaknesses and play on them, that were fundamental characteristics of the great reformer of Russia.

Diaghilev was a born leader and, had it not happened that life had brought him into contact with artists, he would perhaps have displayed his gift in a wider and more significant sphere than ballet and even than art in general.

ALEXANDER BENOIS

From one of the last designers to work for Diaghilev

LIKE the chief of a horde, Serge Diaghilev, subtle and refined Boyar, invaded Western Europe with the plaited tresses and diadems of the heroines of Russian grand opera, with his tragic Igors and Borises glittering with pomp and pageantry, with the sparkling legends of popular folklore sought from a hundred provinces. The melodies, voices and rhythms of a vast empire assumed, through him, the power of greatness.

In one great netful, he abducted the pick of dancers, ballet masters, choreographers and stage decorators from Imperial Russia. Placing himself at their head, he flew from his country and the great adventure began. The war in Europe and the Russian revolution made it difficult to draw on the artistic power of Russia so western musicians and painters were summoned by him and the impetus of the steppes became more attenuated.

The scintillating polychromy of his stage design possessed Europe. The long list of painters who collaborated with him, delighting in his magic, knew that to work for him was to create lasting fame. A black gondola with funereal angels took him away on a rainy day across the Venetian lagoon. Diaghilev had given confidence to, encouraged and directed in his life almost the complete hierachy of the artistic world.

PEDRO PRUNA

From the last great choreographer to work for Diaghilev

YOU know yourself how we admired this wonderful man. It is very difficult to comment on him, but I must say that I owe almost everthing I know to him.

GEORGE BALANCHINE
(in a letter to Anton Dolin).

From three stars of the Diaghilev Ballet

YEARS ago, I had a season with Massine in Paris (it was a flop). One morning I went to Champs-Elysées to pay my respects to Big Serge, who gave me a very cold embrace.

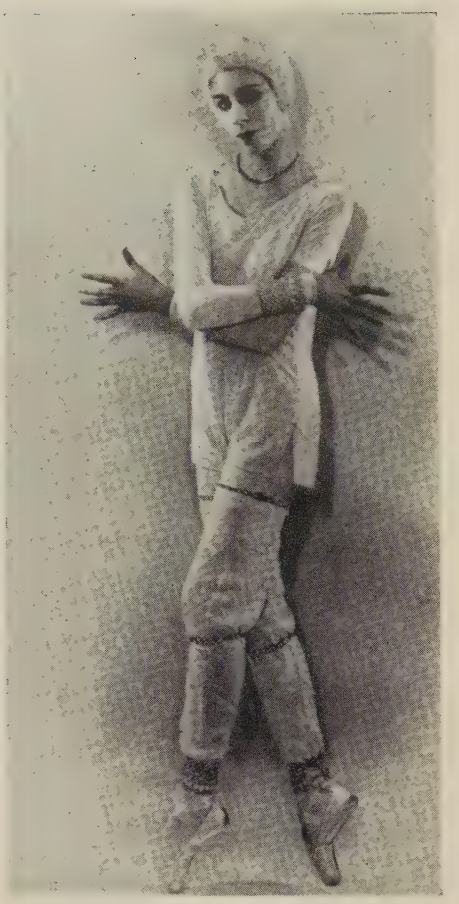
I said, "Why are you so cold?" and he said, "If I run a cocktail bar, I do not approve of another opposite me."

LYDIA LOPOKOVA

IN the realm of Russian art Diaghilev was indeed a prophet. He presented Russian art to the peoples outside of Russia with a great know-how and profound knowledge. He was endowed with God's gift of understanding, creating and performing. All of us who have served the same cause must keep a sacred memory of this great genius of Russian art.

Diaghilev was a sincere and fervent servant of art; he raised the glory of Russian art to an unattainable height and built himself an eternal and unwavering monument in the hearts of all of us.

LUDMILLA SCHOLLAR and
ANATOLE VILZAK



Alicia Markova in title role of Le Rossignol.

From Diaghilev's last potential star

BEING the only child in the company, in fact the only child in the Russian ballet, Diaghilev always seemed like a father to me.

I adored him and all the time I used to go to him with various problems. He never minded and whatever advice he gave me I always respected. In everything his word was law and never, for one second, did it enter my head to do anything other than follow him.

Possibly because he looked on me as a daughter, he was always very generous to me and I can remember innumerable kindnesses. I had been ill with pneumonia and when I returned to the company he demanded to know why I had been ill (he always had a great fear of illness) as he thought I had not rubbed myself down with Eau de Cologne. "But Sergypop", I replied, "I have not enough money for anything like that as I have to eat". I am afraid food always seemed more important to me.

He took out money for me to buy Cologne and after that always saw that I had a supply so that I could rub myself down with spirits. He also gave me money for extra pairs of shoes and so many other things.

On my eighteenth birthday we had been dancing at a big benefit and after it he allowed me to have my first champagne which he paid for. I remember the first sips I ever had with all the company sitting round watching how I should react.

It has become second nature to remember the things he taught me: such things as how to do my hair and how simplicity in appearance is essential in ballet. As regards the dance, he always wanted everything as pure as possible. To Diaghilev I owe everything. At every performance when I step on the stage I still feel his presence with me.

ALICIA MARKOVA

Diaghilev's Note-books

The great artistic projects planned by Diaghilev, some of which were realised and some have since been realised by other people.

Serge Lifar as Apollo in the Balanchine-Stravinsky Apollon Musagète, *one of the most beautiful of the later Diaghilev ballets and in which Lifar gave such a fine performance.*

by SERGE LIFAR

to whom we are indebted for his personal permission to reproduce these extracts from his book *Serge Diaghilev* (published by Putnam, London).

A number of Diaghilev's more ambitious projects were never to reach fruition. But we have a record of their existence because of two note-books, now in my possession. These are of the greatest importance in that they reveal the whole of Diaghilev's effervescent activity, concealed even from those with whom he collaborated most closely. They provide much insight into his methods, and reveal how nothing was too small or insignificant to be given his attention.

Only too vividly do these note-books reveal how restless and troubled was that spirit of his, a spirit never content with what it could give, but ever dreaming of greater achievement.

For his 1923-24 season Diaghilev contemplated a festival in Monte Carlo, another in honour of Stravinsky, another in Austria, another in Italy and Spain, a series of symphony and chamber music concerts, the production of various operas, and a number of painting exhibitions. Swept away by his plans, ever more elaborate, Diaghilev nevertheless began to see that he could not realise them all in a single season, and so spread them over a number of seasons planned to finish in 1928. These plans would spring to mind quite spontaneously, as is shown by the fact that often some ambitious plan follows immediately after the laundry list, to be followed again by hastily scribbled notes, revealing both his impatience and his enthusiasm. A complete lack of any system was combined in him with the mind of an extraordinarily methodical organiser. In these books we find as many as fifteen programmes for the Monte Carlo festival continually revised and altered.

As an example, I quote the first of these programmes (the words in square brackets denoting what Diaghilev crossed out). This whole programme, apart from a few corrections, is in ink, but the names of the painters he had thought of employing occur in pencil in the right-hand column.

I.	*Adam*—Giselle	DERAIN
	Monteclair—Les Plaisirs champêtres	GRIS
	Poulenc—Les Biches	M. LAURENCIN
II.	1. *Méhul*—La Dansomanie	VLAMINCK
	4. *Godard*—Les contes de Perrault	GRIS
	3. *Mouret*—Le jardin des amours	BRAQUE
	2. *Milhaud*—	LEGER?
III.	[*Ravel*]—[Daphnis and Chloe]—Lalo	?
	[*Monsigny*]—Le Ballet de la Royanne *Dalayrac*	MATISSE
	Satie—Parade—DERAIN	PICASSO
		DERAIN
	Delibes—La Fête de la cloche	GONCHAROVA
IV.	*Lesueur*—La cour des miracles	LARIONOV
		[TAIROFF]
	Debussy—l'Après-midi d'un Faune	PICASSO
	Auric—Les Fâcheux	?
	Bizet—Jeux d'enfants	KISLING?
	here the note (N.B. "orchestration Dukas")	
V.	*Auber*—La flûte magique [Naples, 1830]	UTRILLO
	(Note: "arrang. Ansermet")	
	[*Dalayrac*] *Monsigny*—Sérénade à l'Infante	SERT
	Satie—[Parade—Derain]—*Ravel*	
	Chabrier—Valses—Bourrée—Espagna	PICASSO
	(Note for Bourrée: "Orches. Stravinsky").	

In the following programmes, various other ballets appear, such as Lalo's *Namouna* (intended by Diaghilev for Karsavina), Ravel's *Ma mère l'oie*, Debussy's *Pan* (décors by Laurens) Naudot-Satie's *Paul et Virginie*, etc., etc. All these programmes demanded an enormous amount of preparatory work, in connection with which Sergei Pavlovitch had many pages copied from old music books in the Opera library, as, for instance, Auber's *Marco Spada* and *Cheval de Bronze*, and Méhul's *Daphnis et Pandrose*, *Persée et Andromède* and *Le Jugement de Paris*. He too spent much of his time there, studying old scores by Méhul, Herold, Auber, Halévy, Lefèvre, Rameau, Mouret, Mondonville, Destouches, etc., etc., ordered music catalogues, saw innumerable people, consulted authorities, etc.

Festival for Stravinsky

For the three performances of the "Stravinsky Festival" the repertory drawn up by Diaghilev was as follows: *Les Noces Villageoises*, *L'Oiseau de Feu*, *Pulcinella*, *Le Chant du Rossignol*, *Le Sacre du Printemps*, *Le Renard* and *Petrouchka*. It was his intention, too, to provide *L'Oiseau de Feu* with an entirely new setting, and to use Russian singers for *Le Renard*.

The Austrian festival was intended to comprise items by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Johann Strauss, Liszt, Schönberg, Bartók and —under a question mark—Richard Strauss and Brahms. Even more interesting was the plan for the Italo-Spanish festival which was to include Scarlatti's *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur*, Pergolesi's *Pulcinella*, Rossini's *La Boutique Fantasque*, Cimarosa's *Le Astuzie Feminili*, Paisiello's *La Serva Padrona*, Falla's *Le Tricorne*, Albeniz's *Triana*, Berners' *Caprice Espagnol*, Ravel's *Rhapsodie Espagnole* and *Alborada del Grazioso*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*, Glinka's *Jota Aragonesa*, Bordes' *Danses Basques*, Stravinsky's *España*, Falla's *Seville*, Berners' *La Carosse du St. Sacrement* (this last work being much in Diaghilev's thoughts at the time) and works by Breton and Donizetti.

In addition, Diaghilev planned a cycle of six or eight symphony concerts entirely, or almost entirely, devoted to the works of some thirty distinguished French composers, a series of chamber-music concerts, and a Russian festival devoted to works by Aliabiev, Varlamov, Glinka, Dargomijsky, together with operatic works by Bortniansky, Berezovsky, Tchaikovsky—*Eugen Onegin*, Prokofiev—*Tsar Dodon*, and Stravinsky—*Mavra*.

Earlier, and before the decision not to include opera in the Russian seasons, Diaghilev had compiled a long list of comic operas, pride of place being allotted to Delibes. He had also drawn up the following strange and interesting "grand project", for so we find it named in the note-books.

(1) *Carmen*—Bizet; (2) *Le Prince Igor*—Borodin; (3) *Pskovitianka*—Rimsky-Korsakov; (4) *La Dame de Pique*—Tchaikovsky; (5) *Eugen Onegin*—Tchaikovsky; (6) *Le Coq d'Or*—Rimsky-Korsakov; (7) *Mavra*—Stravinsky; (8) *Les Maîtres Chanteurs*—Wagner; (9) *Etoiles*—Chabrier; (10) *Le Roi l'a dit*—Delibes; (11) *Djarmileh*—Bizet; (12) *L'Italiana in Algeri*—Rossini; (13) *Cambiale di Matrimonio*—Rossini; (14) *Snegourochka*—Rimsky-Korsakov; (15) *Don Juan*—Mozart; (16) *Le Barbier de Seville*—Rossini; (17) *Paul et Virginie*—Satie [*Paul et Virginie* occurs very frequently in Diaghilev's lists]; (18) *Falstaff*—Verdi; (19) *Elisir d'Amore*—Donizetti; (20) *Don Pasquale*—Donizetti; (21) *Philidor*; (22) *Servante-maîtresse*—Paisiello; (23) *L'Omelette à la Follembuche*—Delibes; (24) *Le Roi Dodon*—Prokofiev; (25) *Lakmé*—Delibes.

Exhibitions of painting

During this period, we find Diaghilev as interested in plans for exhibitions of painting, as in his projects for ballets and operas. His first conception is limited to the three following exhibitions: (1) An exhibition of French landscape painters including Rousseau; (2) An exhibition of Spanish painters, and works by Cézanne; (3) An exhibiton of works for the theatre. The first of these (which soon assumed a more ambitious shape in his mind, and no longer limited itself exclusively to landscape painters) was intended to comprise a representative collection of works by Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Hubert Robert, Corot, Rousseau, Sanguin, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Matisse, Marquet, Dufy, Vlaminck, Derain, Lhôte, Laurencin, Delaunoy, Seurat, Courbet, Signac, Gleizes, Fragonard, Blanche, etc. The Spanish exhibition was to show works by Zurbaran, Greco, Goya, Diaz, M. Blanchart, Rivera, Ribeira, Zuloaga: the Exposition du Théâtre was to include works by Larionov, Goncharova, Survage, Picasso, Gris, Derain, Matisse, Benois, Laurencin, Leger, Gordon Craig, Lovat Fraser, Zak, Fedorovsky, Stellezky, Hugo Rumbold, Toulouse-Lautrec, Seurat, Gonzaga, Ribeira, Pannini, Chirico, etc. . . .

Another plan was devoted to a portrait exhibition (Ingres, Manet, Monet, Renoir, Derain, Picasso, Modigliani and le douanier Rousseau).

Such projects were no fleeting notions, for much work had already been done on them, and we actually find many references to the ownership and whereabouts of numbers of the paintings he had in mind to exhibit.

Left. Spessivtzieva in the second act of Giselle. *In this greatest of all classic roles she excelled. Proof of this is still to be seen in the extracts from Act I in the film in Madame Rambert's collection.*

Photo: Lipnitzki

Right. In the Fokine - Stravinsky Firebird *partnered by Keith Lester during their season in South America.*

Photo: Lazaro Sudak

Olga Spessivtzieva

Some thoughts on Diaghilev's greatest academic dancer.

by KEITH LESTER

WHEN I think of the classic dance, I think of Olga Spessivtzieva. When I realise that the rhythm of her dance is still, the pattern lost, then I fear lest the classic dance be dead and no man know. We look back, as do all men, to the past and wonder at its perfections: though music and painting flourish amongst us today can one painter hope to outlast Mantegna or one composer Bellini? Can the few great dancers of today compare their greatness with that of Spessivtzieva? Dare any tread hopefully in the immaculate shadow of her Giselle?

I thought that time had enchanted her, and the years of memory beautified her very steps. I felt troubled that I could not enjoy all save a few of the dancers of today because I had once seen the exquisite ease of her dance, the precision, the strength, and the human flesh become an act of devotion that was pure geometry. Then I saw a short film of her in a movement from the 1st Act of *Giselle*, and I know that I am right. She was one of the last great priestesses of the dance; she is one of the three great dancers of my experience—Karsavina, Spessivtzieva, Dolin.

Olga was a worker; her practice lasted

Hard work and sweat

three hours and one sweated from the sixty-four *battements etendu* early at the *barre* to the final reverence at the end of class. Toiling, sweating, rejoicing was the very breath of this practice: we did the exercises of Vazem (Ekaterina Ottovna) and they are, so far as I know, the most severe and sustained of any. But they were the secret of Olga's enormous physical strength.

That slight, frail looking body, those attenuated arms, that slim, long neck, were of the steel of rapiers, and the Vazem exercises were the waters of Toledo. She was excellently turned, beautifully placed; she had the slow and controlled *pirouette* of the superb technician; her *developpé* was high, elegant and unaffected; she was delightful in both face and figure, her mime was simple, noble and moving and she was a devil to work with. At least, so she told me; but I never understood how.

If one is a truly great dancer, one must work untiringly to remain great. So she believed and so she practiced. Olga had only one illusion; she thought that she could jump with any man. The technical excellence of her *jeté* gave the appearance of a good elevation: but, like most well turned dancers, she did not jump high. This however, did not make it difficult to lift her, for she was very light, had a magnificently straight back and absolute confidence.

Her first work in public with me was at Longchamps. We were behind a phalanx of racegoers that was intent, excited and impenetrable. "Assemblez," I said, and *assemblé* she did. From my shoulder she watched the centaurs stream by. We had made our debut in France and not a soul had noticed us. Our next appearance was on the stage of the Colon Opera House, Buenos Aires in the ballet *Firebird*, with Fokine in production and Ansermet conducting the score of Stravinsky.

It has been usual to say that Spessivtzieva had no musical ear, that her sense of tempo was lacking. This is not entirely just; with Fokine she ordered herself to his commands and followed the exact musical phrase of his making: not an easy task when confronted by comparatively difficult music. It is true that she has been known to wander from the baton of an unsympathetic conductor; but with the dance's own musicians was, I think, in time and temper. She had, and quite reasonably, the point of view that she knew exactly at what rate to dance *Giselle, Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Princess;* it became the conductor to keep her time.

Her appreciation of music was not developed beyond the nineteenth century romantic, but this is understandable in a dancer to whom the classic dance was of first importance. With Adam and Chopin the dance may still flow freely on the surface of sound; with the arrival of the new voice of music in the twentieth century the dance becomes vertical as well as horizontal in musical meaning, it permeates the texture, it is one dimension of a structure of which music, colour, architectural shape are others, equal and co-ordinate. With Fokine one has the ballet of nature depicted; the dance floats on the music; the senses are touched by romance, laughter and death; and this, in direct descent, is from *Giselle*.

Terrain of sylphs

The genius of Fokine o'erleapt Petipa to live again with Perrot and the sylphs. So Olga could pass fluently and happily from Giselle to Sylphides, from the phantom of a maid, wooed by a prince, to a maiden wooed by the phantom of a rose: of course, it was almost the same terrain.

But when Diaghilev steps into this idyll with Stravinsky, there are immediate shadows. Fokine is no longer at ease, nor is Spessivtzieva; they are on alien ground. But *Firebird* is one of Fokine's most famous productions. Incorrect; one of Diaghilev's and the greatness of *Firebird* was neither Diaghilev nor Fokine, no, not even Stravinsky: it was Tamara Karsavina: with her it lives and dies. Having more than excellent mime and superb dancing, here she triumphed where Spessivtzieva merely succeeded. This compares them.

As an academic dancer, Karsavina was, perhaps, less perfect than Spessivtzieva: as a classic dancer she was, surely, equal: as an entity of the dance she was, without any doubt, greater. I imagine that their Giselles were equally, but very differently, great.

Spessivtzieva I choose above Trefilova and Egorova as my princess. She alone, for me, could refresh and irradiate the acrobatic persistence of Petipa's too full-pointed ballet. For me she was the dawn of my love for the dance, the true Aurora.

Seraphine Astafieva

In Cléopâtre *with the Diaghilev Ballet*

She Taught Diaghilev's Dancers

It was to Seraphine Astafieva's studio that Diaghilev would go to look for new material. A former member of his company she became a great teacher. She taught Anton Dolin and Alicia Markova and it was in her studio that Diaghilev first saw the young Markova and agreed to take her into his company. From Astafieva, Margot Fonteyn also received her early training.

by MOLLY LAKE

I FIRST saw Astafieva in Chandos Hall, Maiden Lane, off the Strand. This Hall was, I believe, the headquarters of an extremely Left fraternity and was very grim indeed.

On arrival at the murky entrance I was directed by a depressed individual with a very red tie down a dark passage to the dressing-room. This was nothing more or less than a cellar into which one plunged at a break-neck angle down a flight of wooden steps. It was dark and dirty with a very low ceiling, the floor stone had a few strips of decrepit coconut matting scattered about, some wooden chairs and a long wooden table. The aspect generally seemed, to my youthful imagination, secretive and rather sinister.

Having emerged from this dungeon, the new pupil pushed open a very tall door painted dingy brown, and entered the Hall itself. It was large and, like the dressing-room, dirty. It had drab walls and torn oil cloth on the floor. At the far end was a platform raised very high on which stood the piano.

Generally one can hardly imagine a less congenial atmosphere for a great teacher to work in. I can only think that it was the sole room of any size available in the West End of London, as Enrico Cecchetti also taught there at a later date under exactly the same conditions.

Astafieva did not long remain in Chandos Hall. She moved to a studio in the King's Road, Chelsea. Known as the "Pheasantry," the building was a detached red brick house standing in its own courtyard. In this Astafieva occupied the entire first floor, which provided a large and airy studio with a balcony overlooking the courtyard, good dressing-room and living accommodation for herself and her son Slava.

Astafieva was tall, very tall, and most elegant. She always wore high heeled shoes, which emphasised her height and showed to great advantage her tiny and beautiful feet. She had a very small head, to which she also drew attention by covering her hair with a tightly bound scarf. She wore soft, dark dresses, long grey woollen leggings covered her very slender legs. She carried a tall black stick with which she used to stress some particular point of her lesson and on which she occasionally supported herself when demonstrating a very high and very beautiful *developpé*. She smoked incessantly, using a long holder—her general atmosphere was one of immense poise and confidence.

Absorbed by talent

She was, as I remember her, gracious and kindly, with a delightful speaking voice, which she rarely raised even in her most exasperated moments. She was entirely absorbed in her talented pupils and was, I think, almost unaware of the existence of the less talented plodders.

As a teacher she demanded a depth of movement, a length of line and that basic rhythm which gives continuity and spread of pattern on the floor and in the air.

How lovely to see again that ease of movement, that ability to create an illusion of flight, which today has virtually become a lost art! The wings of our dancers have been clipped, their magic art imprisoned in the tense and rigid muscles of their torsos and in the arch of their straining backs—they have largely become as static and unyielding as the line of their tutus.

Is the pull of gravity so much stronger now than it was in those days? Had we but an Astafieva to teach us, would we not regain something of our lost *élan,* both physical and mental?

A class from Astafieva would, I think, be a revelation to most of the present generation of ballet students and one which would probably be more awe-inspiring that comforting. They would be expected to cover the ground easily and rhythmically, with accurate placing.

They must jump, pausing for that fraction of a second at the top of the movement —they must have vitality, speed, great bravery of attack, and pride of carriage.

Tricks dismissed

These things were the basic equipment expected of them, without which they might be acrobats, but never ballet dancers, because the essence of dance was movement. The tricks of *pirouettes* and beats had to be performed, but only within that fluent and elegant framework.

Performed merely as tricks, with an uncomprisingly pedestrian approach, as they are so often now, Astafieva would dismiss the executant with "She is strong girl," then a shrug of her shoulders, "She has no school," meaning that the victim in question had not sufficient basic equipment to enable her to surround her tricks with the beautiful illusions of the classic dance.

Astafieva was, par excellence, a noble and proud teacher of a noble and proud tradition. Her personality dominated her pupils, their allegiance was complete and unwavering. From those in whom she was interested she expected everything, her reaction to the failure of a favourite to reach the standard expected of her, was one of polite scorn.

To those of us who worked with Astafieva, she showed a glimpse of the gods —better to have only a glimpse than to be left complacently unaware of their existence.

EPILOGUE

I was not old enough to have seen the Diaghilev Ballet, but—

WHAT does Diaghilev mean to the vast majority of contemporary ballet-goers, that majority who never saw his company?

I was born 26 years after the death of Queen Victoria but the influence of her reign has profoundly affected every aspect of my life. When Diaghilev died I was a small child; but not one of the innumerable evenings I have since spent at the ballet has not owed that man a debt.

The Diaghilev Ballet in Europe was a blaze of genius and a spark of inspiration. The blaze my generation missed; the spark set off everything we hold dear in the art.

Almost all ballet in the Western world stems from this legendary figure. De Valois, Rambert and Dolin in England, Lifar in France, Balanchine in America (to name a handful) show every night that Diaghilev is not dead. One can possibly over-estimate what he did; one could never over-estimate what he started.

Here lies his ultimate importance. Probably his company represented a Golden Age in ballet (they say it did who saw it, and who could know better?) but that, to us, is unimportant. It is past and faded, and when we are white-haired no one will even be able to recall its splendour. The dancers have almost all left the scene, and the audience is already nearly dispersed.

Like Edmund Kean's impassioned eye, like Mario's top C, like Buddy Bolden's Dixieland cornet, like W. G. Grace's flashing bat—the glory has departed. Those revels now are ended, yet the curtain will rise tonight, and tomorrow night. And ballet, this ballet, that ballet, every ballet, is different because he and the circle he has come to represent, lived.

History is a capricious thing. The death of Diaghilev must have seemed like an ending. But at the time history was pretending and it was really a beginning.

Clive Barnes.

Marina Kondratieva in Cinderella.

Is *This* the Second Ulanova?

The first of a series of articles on ballet in Soviet Russia by the editor of our companion magazine, *Music and Musicians*, who has just returned from a tour of the U.S.S.R.

by EVAN SENIOR

TO go to Moscow, to watch ballet at the Bolshoi, and not to see Ulanova—that, to many in this country, would be considered a complete waste of time. Ulanova was not there when I was, but ballet was.

They said to me, backstage: "What a pity. Our great dancers are away in Berlin —they are our 'Golden Fund' of ballet. But remember, in the Soviet Union ballet is not tied to one or half a dozen dancers."

And from what I saw, they were right. I came away from ballet at the Bolshoi in Moscow, ballet at the Kirovsky (the former Maryinsky of ballet legend), even from the Opera House 2,000 miles to the south in Tiflis, convinced that Russia is still a storehouse of ballet strong enough to revivify the ballet stages of the world if necessary.

In the Bolshoi, Ulanova is a legend as she is elsewhere. But Soviet ballet is not just resting on its laurels: it is also looking to the future.

One night, slipping into my place in the Bolshoi in the dark a few seconds after the curtain had gone up on the first act of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai,* I found my attention riveted on one figure—the slight white-clad figure of a girl.

Marija, led through the ranks of gorgeously clad Polish nobles by her father, was not dancing. She was walking, with that strangely tensed walk of the dancer in *pointe* shoes, out of her element, like a swan on land.

There was something compelling in her appearance, in the combination of ethereal lightness and strength, in the poignant appeal of youth allied to complete assurance.

And then she danced. The choreography of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is nothing extraordinary: a first act of comparatively conventional classical solos, *pas-de-deux* and ensemble against a background of Polish national dances, and the rest equally conventional dancing splashed with the splendour of Tartar and oriental athleticism in colourful production.

But this first act belonged to one dancer —to this slight girl in white.

In the light reflected from the stage I looked at the programme with its unfamiliar Russian script, and spelled out the name—Kondratieva—almost missing, in the necessary concentration, the amazing finale of the first act as the raiding Tartars sacked the festive gathering, slew or carried off their victims in a violent flurry of some couple of hundred dancers, and fired the palace into a blazing inferno of real flame and crashing timbers as the curtain fell.

The splendour forgotten

But the magnificent staging took second place in my mind to the almost incredible performance of this girl. I forgot the flame and the splendour, and remembered that small wraith-like figure, liquid arms used to lift full *pointe* to what seemed even more weightless height, the series of floating *grandes jetées,* three times around that 75-feet-wide stage, incredible elevation, effortless extension. She was like a whisp of mist caught and flung on a puff of breeze.

I said nothing, went home and thought about her after a ballet of which the rest gave her little opportunity beyond the murder scene in the third act, in which she hardly danced but seemed to use her whole body, every limb and muscle, to convey the terror, the resignation, the tragedy of the crushed flower.

Two nights later I saw her again, after the bitter-sweet harmonies of Prokofiev had raised the curtain on the first act of *Cinderella—Zoloushka,* they call it in Moscow.

The same qualities came out all through her performance: the tenderness of the first act, again conveyed with every muscle rather than with facial expression alone. It was a whole body acting, the body of a dancer acting through the means of dancing. The face might not have existed—in any event, it is not a beautiful face, but it is one of the most expressive faces in action or in repose that I have ever seen.

Acting through the dance

Again in the ballroom scene there were similar qualities of acting through the dance: the same strength of back, shoulders and neck, used with an incredible lightness that seemed to flit across the stage rather than to touch it, the same perfection of *pirouette,* of classical attitude, of line and elevation in *jetées* that at one point made me think, blasphemously, of hidden wires! And style. Technically she could not be faulted, aesthetically there was nothing to do but rave.

And when in the second interval I was taken backstage to see something of the technical marvels of that great theatre, we talked about her.

"We think," said one of the directors, "that we have something important in Marina Kondratieva—maybe a possible successor to Ulanova when that regrettable time comes in the future, as it must, of course, for all dancers."

Rastsislav Zacharov, bald-headed solidly-built ballet-master and choreographer, told me about her in the peculiar mixture of English, French, German and my five words of Russian we had to use, while we went downstairs to see Kondratieva.

"She is only 20," he told me, "but we are placing on her so many of our hopes for the future."

As we walked he recounted her history. Two years ago Marina Kondratieva left the Bolshoi's ballet school, already marked out as a pupil of promise.

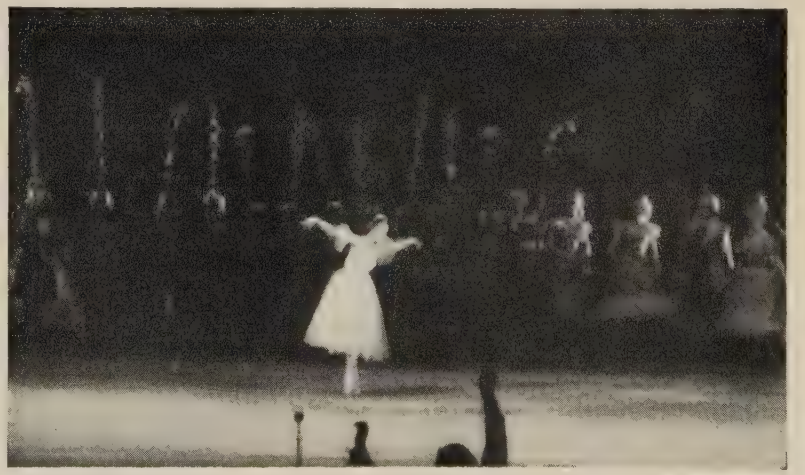
Pre-natal influence?

Perhaps dancing was born in her, for her mother had studied ballet in her youth, and had wanted to be a dancer. But fate had decreed otherwise. She had turned to technology, had become a famous scientist in the realm of physics, and had married another scientist, a member of the Moscow Academy of Science and also a famous physicist.

But the love of dancing had remained dormant and had come out in the girl. At the age of 10 Marina was accepted into the ballet school, and 10 more long years had gone to the making of what I had seen in those two ballets.

At the Bolshoi School her teaching had been mostly in the hands of a former dancer with a name well-known to Western ballet enthusiasts—Tamara Nikitina, but not related in any way to the Nikitina we know.

Continued on page twenty-two



Kondratieva's variations in the ballroom scene of Cinderella *on the stage of the Bolshoi Opera House in Moscow. Filmed during the performance seen by Evan Senior. Photo: USSR Ministry of Culture Film Unit.*

Personality of the month — ALEXANDER BENNETT

Reason: For becoming one of the most promising British male dancers in such a short time after a late start.

I FIRST saw Bennett at the Wimbledon Theatre as Hilarion, and thought he was one of the worst Hilarions I had seen. In the interval, Madame Rambert informed me that he was among the most promising pupils she had ever had, and I gave her a look which I hope was old-fashioned. Of course, she was right.

Within eighteen months the limp Hilarion had been transformed or bewitched into a brilliant Albrecht. That was a year ago and he is continuing to improve with encouraging but bewildering rapidity. Of all the English male dancers in their early twenties, he at the moment appears to be the most mature and polished.

He is well-built and good-looking. His technical equipment is strong and getting stronger. Two years at the head of a company, dancing every role from Dago to Siegfried, every ballet from *Sylphides* to *Winter Night* has given him versatility, and a thoroughly professional approach to the theatre.

In under three years he has danced more roles, more often, than some dancers do in a lifetime. A young *premier danseur* in an old company, the provinces have seen more of his work than has London, but hearing the cheers that greeted his every performance of Albrecht and the young man in Cranko's *Variations on a Theme* during the recent Sadler's Wells season, one sensed that the London public had at last noted him.

His classical work has an air of unquestionable, if reticent, distinction about it. His performance in Cranko's ballet greatly aided the success of that important new work. Bennett has arrived young, so should stay long. When so much fuss is made over any English male dancer who can execute a *double tour en l'air* without falling flat on his face, it seems strange that his advent has not caused a greater critical furore. But it will. **C.B.**

Bennett as the Young Man in Cranko's new ballet, Variations on a Theme, *for Ballet Rambert. He was one of the reasans for the success of this important ballet.*
Photo: Denis de Marney

Is This the Second Ulanova?

continued from page twenty-one

Zacharov, too, had kept an eye on her progress, and when she joined the company his chance came to make use of her. Last year she went with young dancers from Russia to an International Ballet Festival at Bucharest, and won high honours.

When she came back Zacharov began to use her as a second string to his bow. Marija in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and *Cinderella* in the Prokofieff ballet are Ulanova's roles. He coached Kondratieva in them. Now, with Ulanova away, she was dancing them.

In her dressing room we talked, still in the mixture of languages that often broke down and needed an interpreter to sort it out.

Marina Kondratieva is not beautiful if you judge her by usual standards. The face is too round, the cheek-bones too prominent, the mouth a little prominent and small. But there is personality there, strength, and a quiet modesty and determination. The face does not seem to matter as an isolated feature: every movement proclaims a complete entity of physical expression—stance, nobility in the carriage of her head, an almost electric flow of power down the slim young arms to the finger-tips as she holds out her hand. This was not acting: it was the natural command of the body of a dancer.

"There is so much to be done yet," she told me. And on the way out I said to Nikitina: "Congratulations on what you have made—you have a great dancer in your hands." Nikitina looked at me seriously. "I know," she said quietly.

At 20, Marina Kondratieva is already a name whispered eagerly across the stalls and galleries of the Bolshoi Theatre as soon as she appears on the stage. But she is not being spoiled or coddled. There is a future for her, but there is also a present.

NEW RECORDS

Two Diaghilev ballets

Jeux—Poème Dansé. (Debussy). Suisse Romande Orchestra (Ernest Ansermet). One side of Decca LXT2927. 1 12-in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

JEUX, Debussy's last orchestral work, was commissioned by Diaghilev in 1912 and first heard in association with Nijinsky's choreography the following year. The ballet had a lukewarm reception and quickly vanished from the repertoire. The music has since been used for ballets of the same name by Jean Borlin and Jerome Robbins, both sticking to the original scenario based on the flirtations between three tennis players.

That the composer of *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *La Mer* was able to interest himself in such harmless trifles is evident in the superb score that was the outcome, a shimmering web of exquisitely refined musical impressionism. It was generally agreed that the music was much too good for the ballet, its subtlety being far in advance of the broad outlines of Nijinsky's angular choreography. "The music," Debussy wrote in a letter, "has to convey a rather *risqué* situation. But of course in a ballet any hint of immorality escapes through the feet of the *danseuse* and ends in a *pirouette.*"

The performance captures every nuance of the wonderfully varied emotional and poetic content of the music and is given a first rate recording. The reverse offers equally sensitive performances of Ansermet's orchestrations of the *Six Epigraphes Antiques.*

La Boutique Fantasque. (Rossini–Respighi). Philharmonia Orchestra (Robert Irving). HMV DLP1032. 1 10-in. LP, 24*s.* 6½*d.*

AS is the case with the Parlophone and Columbia abbreviated versions of *Boutique,* this new one leaves out a great deal of the connecting passages of mime between the dances. There is, however, the bubbling introduction to the *Can-Can* to which the two dolls are wheeled into place and which is not heard on Decca's virtually complete recording of the ballet. There is much enjoyment to be had from the Philharmonia's beautifully polished playing, excellently recorded if a little variable in quality, but Irving seems unaware of the fact that he is conducting one of the most scintilating and sparkling of all ballet scores and really fails to do justice to the music. Ansermet's version on LXT2555 is still head and shoulders above any other.

Poppy so red

The Red Poppy—Ballet Suite. (Glière). Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Hermann Scherchen). One side of Nixa WLP6210–1. 1 12-in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

THE RED POPPY, first given at the Bolshoi with Lopukhov's choreography in 1927, is a large-scale spectacular ballet in three acts based on dock-side incidents in a large Chinese port. Glière's score is highly regarded in the U.S.S.R. and judging from the extracts given on this record (*Heroic Dance of the Coolies; Scene and Dance with the Golden Fingers; Dance of the Chinese Girls; Phœnix; Waltz; Dance of the Sailors*), it is first rate ballet music of its type, lushly orchestrated with broad soaring melodies ideal for the deployment of grand-manner classical display. Tchaikovsky would seem to be the model for much of the style with an echo or two of Scriabin in the big climaxes. China is suggested in the manner of Puccini's *Turandot* and *Madame Butterfly* with almost a direct quotation from the latter opera occurring in the *Golden Fingers* adagio.

The famous *Russian Sailors' Dance,* given last here, provides the finale to the first act.

Performance is at a high standard and the recording gives a splendid account of all the glittering colours of the opulent scoring. The only snag, for those primarily concerned with ballet music, is that the performance takes up the first side of a two disc set otherwise devoted to a performance of the same composer's Third Symphony.

Unwelcome castanets

The Lover and the Nightingale. (Granados). Antonio and Rosario (castanets), Pablo Miquel, Angel Curras (pianos). Columbia DB3461. 1 10-in. 78, 5*s.*

ACCORDING to the advertisements, this is "the latest brilliant recording made by Antonio and Rosario." As most readers of *Dance and Dancers* will know, the Antonio–Rosario partnership was dissolved some considerable time ago. Perhaps Columbia persuaded the popular pair to record this castanet duet since their "split." My guess is that this is merely a delayed issue of a recording made at the same time as DX1817 and DX1846 on which Antonio and Rosario add castanet and other percussive accompaniment to dances by Falla and Albeniz.

Some people may feel that the fact that the two dancers are Spanish entitles them to take liberties with their compatriots' music. So far as the previous issues were concerned there was some justification—the music was intended for dancing and the castanets and foot-stampings were not out of place.

But Granados's haunting little piece is another matter altogether; and what has been done to it here is about the most tasteless example of misuse of music that has come my way for a very long time. The sound of the staccato rattle of the two pairs of castanets against the flowing lines of the very beautiful melody might give pleasure to some, but the vulgarity and incongruity of it all will make anyone with even a scrap of musical sensitivity squirm.

Animal frolic

Carnaval of the Animals. (Saint-Saëns). Jeanne Visele, Frank Vanbulck (pianos), Belgian National Radio Orchestra (Franz André). Telefunken LGM65013. 1 10-in. LP, 27*s.* 3½*d.* Annie D'Arco, Roger Boutry (pianos), Colonne Concerts Association Orchestra (George Sebastian). One side of Nixa ULP9099. 1 12-in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

THE SWAN, the best-known piece from Saint-Saëns' *Grande Fantaisie Zoölogique,* and the only one the composer allowed to be published during his lifetime, will always be associated with Anna Pavlova who was largely responsible for its world-wide popularity. The complete suite has served as the basis for Ballet Rambert's ballet of the same name, the original version of which had Andrée Howard choreography and was a characteristic example of her close observation of, and interest in, animal movement. The later edition by Cecil Bates, left out *Fossils* and aimed at choreographic commentary on human personality in terms of animal affinities.

The extremely witty score makes ingenious and pointed use of bits and pieces from Saint-Saëns' own *Danse Macabre* and from other composers' music. Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* Can-Can is heard in slow motion in *Tortoises,* while the double bass gives out one of the themes from Berlioz's *Dance of the Sylphs* in *The Elephant* (Saint-Saëns was well acquainted with ballet).

The Belgian Radio Orchestra's performance is over-burlesqued in the manner of the comedian who laughs at his own jokes and the recorded sound is bright but a little blurred at the edges. The Nixa is much more pleasingly engineered and gives a performance of far greater subtlety. Sebastian obviously realising that there is far more musical value in the work than some conductors (including Franz André) would have us believe. In both performances *The Swan* is given in the original scoring for 'cello solo accompanied by two pianos.

David Hunt.

SADLER'S WELLS AT COVENT GARDEN

Heaton's Giselle

ANNE HEATON, having danced *Giselle* at short notice during the American tour, made her London debut in the rôle at the matinee of June 5. The joyous innocence she brought to the early scenes heightened the tragedy of her sad and gentle mad scene. The success of her first act was to be expected, but a pleasant surprise was her equal success in act 2, thanks to her unusual ballon, her sense of style and the intelligence behind all her work.

John Field, new to the rôle of Albrecht, supported her admirably. A strong partner, a good actor and a fine dancer, his youthful interpretation was ideally suited, in style and manner, to Heaton's. The peasant *pas de deux* in act 1 was danced with a rather coy charm by Catherine Boulton and with vigour by Michael Boulton.

AMONG other recent cast changes, Brenda Taylor has danced her first solo rôle, that of the Red Queen in *Checkmate*, bringing both warmth and tenderness to her interpretation. Cynthia Blowers has danced in the Bluebird *pas de deux*, her third important part in the past few weeks. Once again her assurance, style and musicianship were outstanding. Undoubtedly we shall see much more of her. **John Percival.**

The season ends

THE season ended on June 26 with a performance of *Veneziana*, *Coppelia* Act III and the final act of *Sleeping Beauty*. A rather odd programme but presumably designed to show most of the company, though Violetta Elvin and John Field were conspicuous by their absence.

With Beriosova, *Veneziana* has suddenly turned into an excellent opening ballet. Beriosova's fluid quality seemed somehow to pull the whole work together; her arms are very beautiful. It is good to know that, after all the criticism hurled at it, this ballet has at last emerged as most useful to the repertoire.

The third act of *Coppelia* was far from happy as a centre-piece of the evening. In this position the weaknesses, becoming only too apparent, were all shown up. Some of the dresses are most undistinguished. Nor was Nerina anything like as good as the Swanilda she can be. Blair, as Franz, gave a very good account of himself in spite of a costume which is really very stupid. Anya Linden, as Dawn, again stole the show; a thing she seems wont to do.

The last act of *Sleeping Beauty* made the perfect setting for Fonteyn and Somes and, as usual, we were not disappointed.

So ended a season which can hardly be called exciting. The tiredness of the company, after its American tour, took curious forms: sometimes the performances were as good as we have ever seen, sometimes one wondered why the public did not demand their money back. But for twelve weeks the company danced every night and although for the remainder of the season they only gave three or four performances a week, it still must have been very gruelling not to say boring.

In spite of the new *Coppelia*, the lack of any real creation in the repertoire is making itself felt. We welcome the production of *Firebird* as it will be most useful and also a fine rôle for Fonteyn, but let us hope that this is the last of the revivals for many a long year. If dancers have no new rôles to create, then they start to lose interest and the general level inevitably flags.

If any work is to be revived, let us have Ashton's *Scènes de Ballet* back in the repertoire and what is wrong with a revival of his *Horoscope*? But please, please, dear Directors of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, let us have some new creations very quickly! **P.W.**

BALLET RAMBERT

NO visitors are more welcome to the metropolitan London area than the Ballet Rambert. During the company's recent fortnight's season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, starting on June 14, it was possible to see that it had consolidated its position from its last appearance at the theatre a year ago. While the surprise caused by the startling improvement it showed in 1953 was naturally lacking, the company gave a series of highly polished and enjoyable performances.

The season was also notable for the production of no less than three ballets new to London—Jack Carter's *Love Knots* and a revised version of his Ballet Workshop production *Lola Montez*, together with John Cranko's first Rambert ballet *Variations on a Theme*, a stimulating and controversial work which will be reviewed in full in our next issue.

LOVE KNOTS

First given in London by the Ballet Rambert at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on June 14. Choreography, Jack Carter. Music, Hummel arranged by Leonard Salèndo. Decor and costumes, Ronald Ferns.

Cast

The Black Page - - - PATRICIA ASHWORTH
Mistress of Ceremonies - GILLIAN MARTLEW
The Soldier - - - - RONALD YERRELL
The Lady Succeeding - - - - - ANN HORN
The Lady Failing - - - NOREEN SOPWITH
Other Ladies and Gentlemen
Audrey Nicholls, Thelma Litster, Patricia Dyer, Selma Siegertz, Norman Dixon, Terry Gilbert, Norman Morrice and John Chesworth.

DURING the Festival of Britain three years ago the Arts Council commissioned two ballets from the Ballet Rambert, both of which have since fallen from the repertory. One of these was *Fate's Revenge*, with choreography by David Paltenghi and decor and costumes by Ronald Ferns. It was to make use of the set and costumes for this ballet that Jack Carter was invited to mount *Love Knots*, his first original work for the Ballet Rambert.

In these circumstances it would be too much to expect Carter to produce a work of any great or lasting quality, and it is to his credit that he has been able to make a useful repertory pot-boiler out of the cast-off material left him. As long as the pot is not allowed to boil too frequently this should make an acceptable opening ballet for some time to come.

Carter's theme is slight, the period suggested is at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when all men were dashing and only Jane Austen knew what fluttered in the heart underneath a feminine petticoat.

A young Officer goes to a ball, and falls in love. He writes his love a *billet-doux*, but unfortunately gives it to a negro page to deliver. The page, having little sense and no sensibility, gives it to the wrong girl, a dewey-eyed innocent at her first ball. Innocence is not in this instance triumphant, and after an awkward assignment with the wrong girl, the soldier chases after his original choice, leaving behind him a broken heart and, one imagines, a lengthy entry in the young girl's diary.

Unimaginative ensemble

Assisted by the pleasantly tuneful score, Hummel arranged by Leonard Salzedo, Carter has come close to catching the atmosphere of the period. The choreography for the principals is fluent and inventive, the *pas de deux* for the ardent, innocent and the reluctant soldier, ranking among the best we have yet seen from Carter. The dancing allotted to the *ensemble* is far less distinguished; its straight lines and unimaginative figures cast a dull shadow over the whole work, which tends to obscure, particularly at a first seeing, its moments of felicity. The journey to and from the ball, serving as a prologue and epilogue to the work, are over-prolonged.

Strangely enough the decor and costumes by Ronald Ferns, which after all were the *raison de'etre* of the whole ballet, seemed far less effective than as we remembered them. The setting, an Adam-like assembly room, is far too squat; it has none of the grace and elegance of the architectural style it is emulating. It also restricts the stage's dancing area. The costumes, particularly those for the women, do not always look good in movement.

Noreen Sopwith and Ann Horn both danced delightfully as the rivals. Ronald Yerrell, a newcomer to the company, showed a forceful stage personality and neat partnering ability as the soldier. When he has acquired a stronger technique he will be a considerable asset to the company. Other good work was done by Patricia Ashworth (as the Page, a role that looked as though it had been conceived for a male dancer), Norman Dixon and Terry Gilbert. At some later performances Horn's rôle was taken by Anne Lascelles, who seemed somewhat out of sympathy with the work's atmosphere and danced indifferently.

Lola lives again and dies

JACK CARTER'S ballet *Lola Montez*, which was given its first public performance in London on June 17, was reviewed in full in our May issue, on its first production by Ballet Workshop. The present version makes a number of changes from the original ballet.

The principal additions are the insertion of a scene in Vine Street Police Station, and a variation for the "Intermission" girl who introduces the ballet's many scenes. The decor and costumes by Norman McDowell, which were little more than sketches at the Mercury Theatre, have been slightly revised and handsomely executed. The Verdi score has been orchestrated by Leonard Salzedo.

I personally found the ballet singularly unfunny at the Mercury Theatre, and I found it still singularly unfunny at Sadler's Wells. I can only hope that the ballet will prove, as I think it may, a box-office attraction. Certainly the selection of popular Verdi tunes should make the non-Verdi lover hum, and the decor and costumes show McDowell to be a designer of wit and invention.

The rôle of Lola Montez was danced, as in the original production, by Anne Lascelles. Her performance, like the ballet as a whole, restricts itself to a burlesqued exposition of the more ridiculous aspects of Mlle. Montez' character and gives no hint of the very real qualities that lady must have possessed to have become a legendary figure.

Alexander Bennett played the parts of her various lovers with aplomb, and Mary Munro showed an enviable gift for comedy timing as the bored and bewildered "Intermission" girl. Among a large cast who all danced well, Norman Dixon, if only for his brief cameo as a scrofulous Magistrate, was outstanding.

Rambert's fine company

PROMINENT during the season was the much and rightly lauded Rambert production of *Giselle*. This is discussed in detail elsewhere, but on June 25 the performance was given the added interest of a Giselle new to London, Mary Munro. Munro must now be considered one of the finest dramatic dancers in England —her performance in *Winter Night* can only be compared with performances by dancers like Kaye, Jeanmaire and Hinton. Yet in spite, or rather because of this, her first essay at Giselle was just a little disappointing.

She looked healthy, hearty and aristocratic in the first Act. There was none of the neurotic feyness that the character needs to build up to the mad scene. When the mad scene came it was, as one would have expected, magnificently acted—Munro needs no lessons here—but such madness came strangely to the cheerfully normal girl who had been so far portrayed.

In the second Act she danced with neat precision. All the favourite clichés about Giselle in this act (intangible, wraith-like and the rest) have to be put aside for her performance. Her dancing was not like thistledown nor even like spun gossamer, but in place of the more ethereal aspects of the role she presented a mysterious radiance and chill warmth which were unusual and refreshing. In time Munro should develop into a significant Giselle.

The rest of the repertory yielded many good performances from a company which is as strong as any Rambert has had in years. Bennet, Goldwyn, Munro and Sopwith are a splendid quartet of young dancers, developing with every season. They are in every way worthy to lead one of Europe's most distinguished ballet companies. Norman Dixon and Terry Gilbert (both fine in *Dark Elegies* and *Gala Performance*), Ann Horn and Anne Lascelles provide a middle strength to the company that once was lacking. Among the dancers that can be

The new scene which has been added by Jack Carter to his Life and Death of Lola Montez. *Lola (Anne Lascelles, centre) finds herself in Vine Street Police Station.*
Photo: Paul Wilson

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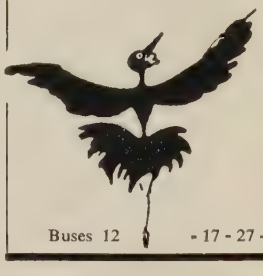

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Rikki Septimus, Patricia Colbourne and Arthur Solomon in Conflict, *the second of the recent new works for Ballet Workshop. Photo: Paul Wilson.*

accounted promising are Audrey Nicholls, Patricia Ashworth and Selina Wylie.

A final word for Gillian Martlew and John Chesworth in *Gala Performance*. As the possibly Italian ballerina (I say possibly because even the programme notes now cast doubts on the accuracy of Tudor's nomenclature of the three ballerinas of the Gala) and her cavalier, these young dancers give a high comedy performance that brought the house down. Martlew's portrait is fast becoming an old favourite, and she shared honours with Chesworth, who not only improved on Bennett's earlier and seemingly definitive portrayal, but introduced some really funny comic business of his own. The whole performance of *Gala* helped to make up for the regrettable lack of an entire Tudor evening. **C.B.**

The mighty atom

SOME ignorant person once described the Rambert *Giselle* as a good "small" production. The only thing small about it is that, owing to the size of the company and the theatres in which it plays, the production is not so lavish nor are there so many dancers in it as in the elaborate productions of the big companies of the world. Actually this *Giselle* is bigger in conception than any I have ever seen.

It is the best filled production in that there are none of those empty passages which so often break the continuity of Gautier's fine narrative. There is a perfectly logical reason for everything that happens on the stage. Each rôle, however small, is turned to a nicety and the balance is just right. The two star rôles—Giselle and Albrecht—are spot-lighted so that they stand out but the others are knit so close that they never become minor roles.

How beautifully is the conversation between Bathilde and the Prince conceived! Bathilde says: "What a pretty girl that is! She also is in love and engaged to be married. I know what, I will give her this necklace as a present." Again what a good idea to have Hilarion hanging around the village all the time so that he knows just what is going on: he is standing by the corner of Giselle's cottage and his hand happens, quite by chance, to touch the hunting horn the Prince has left behind. This gives him the idea of summoning the royal party by blowing it. But there are so many little touches which make the story live.

Goldwyn steps further

Last year Beryl Goldwyn was hailed as the most promising Giselle of our time. This year she is accepted but it is was necessary for her to consolidate her position. This she has done and if she has not quite made the advance that some may have expected, it should be remembered that it takes all of ten years for a ballerina to master this particular rôle. The artist has to mature within herself. Her one fault is that she hurries the first act variation too much. A study of the greatest exponents shows that this should be done with a slow ease and serenity (at this moment Giselle is blissfully happy, she loves her man and no shadow has yet clouded her sky).

Goldwyn's mad scene is finely conceived and incredibly moving; so also is her second act. But here again a greater slow flow right through the body to the extremeties would be an improvement.

The greatest improvement of all was in the Albrecht of Alexander Bennett. He looks virile and manly, he has the best *batterie* I have seen in a British dancer for years, his *double tours* are perfectly finished. He looks like becoming Dolin's successor in this rôle.

Most excellent also were the smaller rôles particularly, Gillian Martlew as a sympathetic Bathilde, Norman Dixon as a not too borish Hilarion (though his make-up needs toning-down) and Ann Horn as a Myrtha I should not care to face up to even in broad daylight. Especially good was Anne Lascelles as Berthe, a lovingly stern mother if ever there was one.

Above left. A group from Ronald Wilson's Four Poems *with Ineke Clazina and Alexis Gohar centre. Photo: Paul Wilson.*

The *corps de ballet* could have been more discipled in the second act but they are forgiven because they were so intelligent as villagers in the first.

No, there is nothing "small" about this production. **P.W.**

As there was not enough space to give such an important work full justice, we have decided to hold over criticism and pictures of John Cranko's new work for 'Ballet Rambert, *Variations on a Theme*, **until the next issue.**

BALLET WORKSHOP

FOUR POEMS

First given professionally by Ballet Workshop on June 20, 1954, at the Mercury Theatre. Choreography and costumes, by Ronald Wilson. Music, Virgil Thomson. Poems, Walter de la Mare. Narrator, Barbara Grimes

Cast

The Girl - - - - - - INEKE CLAZINA

with

Ann Broder, Jean McPhee, Juliet Prowse, Alexis Gohar.

THIS is the second ballet to be choreographed by the ballet designer, Ronald Wilson. Like the first, *One, Two, Three*, it was first performed by the Coryphee Ballet Club, receiving its first performance on May 21, 1954, under the title *To Walter de la Mare*.

Although Wilson was trained as a dancer at the Rambert School, early in his career he took to designing and he has never appeared as a professional dancer.

Like his first ballet, *Four Poems* reveals musicality and a sure knowledge of what ballet is about. The present work is possibly slightly influenced by Martha Graham's *Letter to the World*, but Wilson fails to give the same lively dance realisation to de la Mare's childhood poems as Graham brought to the poems of Emily Dickinson. His dances are too simple (partly no doubt because they were originally intended for performance by amateurs and students) and lack not ideas, but sheer dance invention.

Virgil Thomson's music made an appropriate background to the dancing and the poems, which were well read by Barbara Grimes. The ballet was well danced, but the work as a whole, although in perfect taste, lacked excitement and theatricality. Nevertheless it is interesting to note that Wilson shows as much choreographic talent and rather more imagination than most of the *dancers* who present first ballets at Ballet Workshop.

CONFLICT

First given by Ballet Workshop on June 20, 1954, at the Mercury Theatre. Choreography, Ivor Meggido. Music, James Stevens. Decor and costumes Margaret Kaye.

Cast

Patricia Colbourne, Rikki Septimus, Joan Elvin, Arthur Solomon, Barbara Doe, Maureen Clarke, Roy Evans, Kenneth Robson.

This ballet is an essay on conflicting emotions symbolised here by those of a young girl tempted away from her secluded life.

CONFLICT is, I presume, the first work by a young man. The theme he has selected for his ballet is difficult and uncompromising. He has chosen to compose in that rewarding but dangerous genre that stands as a halfway-house between the narrative and the plotless ballet, a genre we might dub "emotional" ballet.

Such a work if it is to be successful requires above all else a strong sense of architechtonics. The form and structure of the work must be emotionally and visually satisfying if the ballet is not to appear amorphous and purposeless. Just as a note is not music, so a step is not ballet; the dances must be blended and integrated if the work is to have a feeling of construction and shape about it.

Although Meggido showed a certain gift for dance invention—an extended *pas de deux* was quite definitely impressive—he was unable to weld the elements of his dance into the formal pattern of a ballet.

The music by James Stevens seemed on a first hearing to lack the same qualities of form as the choreography, but had an individual flavour which was far from displeasing. Margaret Kaye, in her first ballet designs since Cranko's *Beauty and the Beast*, has produced an interesting decor for the work, which was well danced by a group of dancers most of whom originate from the current musical, *The King and I*. **C.B.**

TELEVISION

MARGOT FONTEYN and MICHAEL SOMES in scenes from LE LAC DES CYGNES with Arnott Mader.

Given on June 9th: Choreography, Ivanov and Petipa: Music, Tchaikovsky: Played by the London Symphony Orchestra, Conducted by Robert Irving: Settings Michael Yates: Effects, Lotte Reiniger: Produced by Christian Simpson.

MARGOT FONTEYN and Michael Somes had scarcely had time to unpack their suitcases after their arrival from Yugoslavia before they were spirited off to Shepherd's Bush; although the journey itself was not so arduous the pitfalls that awaited them at their destination were considerably greater. Unlike in the theatre, in a television performance a much greater responsibility is shouldered by the production element in a single guest performance, on whom to a much greater extent falls the possible success or failure of the programme.

Margot Fonteyn has in the past possibly been very prudent by limiting her television performances to a bare minimum; this was only her third appearance since the war in this country; the first was in 1946, when the transmission service reopened after the war years. She did not then appear again until 1949, when with Harold Turner she danced in a programme consisting of excerpts from *Le Baiser de La Fée* and *The Wise Virgins;* so it was with a certain sense of anticipation that we awaited the proposed excerpts from *Le Lac des Cygnes*.

There are few people who could have been more suited to introduce the programme than Robert Irving, the musical director of the Sadler's Wells Company which he accomplished in a most polished style. He introduced the dancers and spoke a few words on the story of the *Swan Lake*—of how it was based on an old German legend—besides speaking a few words on the various complexities of the Odette-Odile role.

The opening shots of the ballet sequences immediately succeeded in capturing the mood and atmosphere, which is so essential to the second act. The opening was strangely reminiscent to that of the film of Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*, with the cameras gradually exploring the Prince's castle, until at last they come to rest on one of the turrets, where Siegfied is discovered, alone with his thoughts. The shapes of several swans can be seen flying across the evening sky. From the castle, the cameras transported us to a woodland clearing where, amongst the shadows of the trees, against the dim outline of the castle in the background, Fonteyn made her entrance.

There are few superlatives that one time or other have

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not been lavished on Fonteyn's Odette, I can only say that her performance was matchless in its beauty; she was, after a seemingly nervous start expertly partnered by Michael Somes.

At the end of the act as the Prince stood watching the swans disappearing into the distance, we were transported back to the studio where Robert Irving spoke a few words on the subject of the *Dance of the Cygnets*, which he summed up rather wryly as a dance where one hoped to find perfect ensemble. After a discussion on the four national character dances in the third act, the London Symphony Orchestra played the Mazurka and the Czardas. Both were well played with great verve and spirit.

From the production angle the excerpts from the third act did not quite achieve the standard set by the first half; for the filmed superimpositions could not be described as an unqualified success; the first of which, although only designed to portray a transient impression in the Prince's mind of the tender Odette, bore more resemblance to a break in transmission; the second of the superimpositions was more successful.

Fonteyn as the flashing Odile performed the famed thirty-two *fouettés* with consumate ease. Unfortunately it was not possible to appreciate the full beauty of her *port de bras*, due to the design of the set, consisting of a series of arches and pillars, lit in such a way as to distract one's full attention. In this case, perhaps a plain backcloth would have been more beneficial.

Somes, a dancer and partner of great nobility looked very handsome. He danced his difficult variation magnificently; his elevation was remarkable, whilst his *entrechats* were perfectly executed; one could not fail to be thrilled by the performances of these two great dancers.

The first of Michael Yates settings was ideal, the second of which, as I have discussed, was not exactly beneficial to the dancers. Robert Irving and the London Symphony Orchestra were immaculate.

In the past Christian Simpson has given us some very fine productions, one must therefore judge him by his own standards. The second half of this programme fell somewhat short of what was expected, due mainly to some rather poor effects, notably the superimpositions and some rather odd stunted swans that periodically flew across the screen. Nevertheless it still remains the highlight of televised ballet so far this year. **Nicholas Baker.**

Right: Somes as Albrecht, Arnott Mader as Von Rothbart, and Fonteyn as Odile in the television Swan Lake.
Television photograph.

Stop Press

AS we go to press it has been announced that Sadler's Wells Ballet will return to Covent Garden on August 31 for a month's season which will include many performances of the revival of Fokine's *Firebird* with Fonteyn in the title rôle.

Immediately following this season, the Paris Opéra Ballet will open at Covent Garden for two weeks. The works they will bring include: *Les Indes Galantes* Act II, *Mirages, Suite en Blanc, L'Oiseau de Feu, Etudes, Phèdre, Variations*, etc.

Following their two week season in Paris, the Sadler's Wells Ballet will tour Italy. They will probably play in Milan, Rome, Naples and Florence. On their return to England, they embark on a provincial tour returning to Covent Garden mid-December.

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

SPAIN

GRANADA FESTIVAL

FOR the second time leading Sadler's Wells dancers appeared at the Granada International Festival of Music and Dance and for the second time they came and conquered. What is more they created a furore amongst an international "blasè" audience of many thousands that was so tired of having to digest (as an American girl put it) 21 concerts in 12 days. Thanks to Margot Fonteyn and her dancers the Festival ended in apotheosis.

The much awaited novelty of the season was a solo choreographed by Frederick Ashton on music by Sullivan, arranged by Robert Irving, and called *Entry of Madame Butterfly*. We are told that this solo will not be danced in London, but reserved for recitals abroad. It is a pity that England will not see Margot Fonteyn in a Christian Dior pink and lemon creation of what he thinks is a Kimono, rotating a dainty parasol or fluttering about with two little fans (that really look like butterflies), in a series of *pas* that delicately illustrate the pathos of the famous geisha. The public adored it and only Margot Fonteyn could give us such melancholic and moving expressions.

Michael Somes danced a new solo: a Yugoslavian folk dance accompanied by the music of Yugoslav composer Rihriscic. A good effort that pleased the public for its novelty.

Alexander Grant got the audience cheering when he danced the variations of the Spirit of Fire from Malcolm Arnold's *Homage to the Queen*. Nor must we forget April Olrich, Anya Linden, Michael Boulton, Pauline Clayden, Brian Shaw who all contributed with *pas-de-duex*, solos or dancing in the *ensemble*. The repertoire included everything from *Sylphides*, to *Patineurs* and *Spectre de la Rosa;* everything was danced with spirit and perfection in the ideal surroundings of the gardens of the Generaliffe.

This place would steal the show if the dancers were not good enough: the eyes of the audience would wander from the stage to the fantastically illuminated trees, flower beds and fountains.

Cyril Homs

SOUTH AFRICA

SADLER'S WELLS

THE Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet played for seven weeks in Johannesburg. This constituted a record for the company who have never played anywhere for so long outside London. It was also a record for Johannesburg as, apart from musicals, no visiting company has played to full houses for such a long period.

The premiére of Rodrigues' new work *Café des Sports* was a tremendous success which has continued for every one of its performances. London will have to wait until the autumn to see this work, about a Mediterranean village inhabited only by artists, which has music by Anthony Hopkins and scenery and costumes by Jack Taylor, the new designer who has discovered by the Redfern Gallery in London. As the Urchin, Maryon Lane gave a remarkable performance.

The most popular ballets of the season were the dramatic ones—*Blood Wedding* and *Rake's Progress*. *Coppelia* was also much liked. The male dancers of the company came in for a lot of praise, especially David Poole, Pirmin Trecu and Kenneth Macmillan.

AS has already been announced in *Dance and Dancers,* Patricia Miller and Dudley Davies got married in Cape Town thus adding to the formidable list of married couples in the company.

ANOTHER member of the company, Veronica Vail, will not be returning to England as she is getting married to Robin Short who is a District Officer in Northern Rhodesia. Congratulations to both these couples.

LONDON will welcome the company back in September with at least two new works in the repertoire—Rodrigues' *Café des Sports* and a new version of Macmillan's *Laiderette* (which created such a profound impression when it was given by the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group in the winter). On the company's return, John Cranko will start on his first three-act ballet, tentitively called *The Green Serpent*, which will have its world premiére at Sadler's Wells Theatre early in the New Year.

SWEDEN

STOCKHOLM FESTIVAL

The Skeaping Swan Lake

THE importance of Mary Skeaping's production of *Swan Lake* to the Swedish Ballet is self-evident, and it is also interesting to note that this is the first time (Miss Skeaping herself subsequently mounted it in Helsinki and Havana) that the full-length version of the Petipa-Ivanov-Tchaikowsky classic has ever been produced outside Russia and England.

Skeaping's production follows in general outline the version mounted by Nicolai Sergueff from his records made at the Maryinski, and is so accorded in the programme, but Skeaping has taken the opportunity to make many innovations, some of them startling, all of them logical.

Compared as a production with the Covent Garden version, disregarding the superior English designs, the Swedish production has many points of advantage. Naturally enough the work is considerably better danced and acted in London, but many of Skeaping's production touches could be adopted by Sadler's Wells.

The first two Acts are similar to Sadler's Wells. In the first Act a re-construction of the *Pas de Six* is used instead of the choreographically more interesting version by Ashton. The dances are well integrated with the crowd movement. The act ends with a flight of swans flying across the cyclorama.

The outstanding novelty in the second Act is the introduction of a mechanical owl to herald the appearance of Rothbart in human form. Like the flight of swans earlier, this device is effective in conception, but needed to be carried out with greater care.

It is in the third Act that Miss Skeaping has made her greatest contribution to *Swan Lake* production. The most obvious improvement is in dressing the hitherto anonymous "Fiancées" in various national costumes, one Polish Princess, two Italian, two Spanish and one Hungarian. Not only does each of the Princesses dance a fragmentary variation, freely based on the national steps of her country, but also the dancers giving the divertissement (the Polonaise, Neapolitan Dance, Spanish Dance and Mazurka) are introduced as part of the entourage attached to the appropriate Princess. This valuable innovation greatly adds to the dramatic plausibility of the Act.

Many new touches

Another new touch (found also in some Soviet productions) is in having Rothbart and Odile enter after the national dances have been completed. Thus after meeting, instead of rushing off to do unmentionable things in the billiard room or whatever it is Odile and Siegfried *do* do in other productions, here they immediately start off into the *grand pas de deux*.

After Siegfried's betrothal to Odile, Odile and Rothbart are changed into owls and fly off into the night. (During the blackout following Siegfried's oath, two dancers dressed as owls are substituted for the Magician and his daughter; the "owls" run up the staircase at the back, and two very realistic mechanical owls fly across the back-cloth).

Into the last Act, Skeaping has introduced a number of new choreographic formations, and after the self-sacrifice of Odette and Siegfried the death of Rothbart takes place on stage.

The décor and costumes by Sven-Erik Skawonius are not really worthy of this extremely interesting production. Although the third act setting, with a fine vaulted roof, is effective, elsewhere the designer never rises above an innocuous dowdiness.

Carried through by the skillful production the total effect of the performance was remarkably good, but the standard of the actual dancing varied a good deal in quality. Few of the dancers walk well, their stage presence is weak, their acting poor, and their character dancing nigh-on appalling. There

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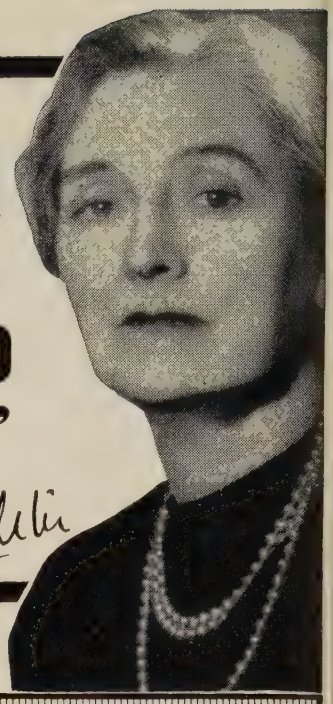

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are, of course, exceptions, but on the whole the company has more to learn in all these departments of their craft than had the Sadler's Wells Ballet of ten years ago.

However their classical dancing is respectable, to say the least; the company possesses a number of talented and promising dancers. The *pas de trois* (Gerd Andersson, Wiweka Ljung and Willy Sandberg) and the *pas de six* (Birgit Grefveberg, Anne-Marie Wallin, Kerstin Lust, Gunnar Randin, Verner Klavsen and Kaj Selling) were both attractively danced.

But the success or failure of *Swan Lake* depends largely on its principals, and in Mariane Orlando and Teddy Rhodin Stockholm must count itself fortunate. Rhodin is not a particularly good classical technician, but in all he does he shows himself an artist. English audiences would compare him more with Helpmann than with Somes. He partners well, has an attractive and manly stage personality, acts with sincerity and bears himself with distinction. As he later showed, he is not at his best as Siegfried, but his experienced professional approach enables him to give a good portrayal and to be a continual source of strength to his young ballerina.

Mariane Orlando is a delightful Odette-Odile. She is not yet a ballerina in the strictest sense of the word (baby-ballerinas are only a Press Agent's dream) but she is likely to become one. Beautifully equipped physically, she has a natural line, a graceful *port de bras*, and a slightly austere, unaffected manner. There is a simple directness about her dancing, a lack of sophistication and artifice that has an instant appeal. At times one gets a fascinating glimpse of the dancer she could become in about ten years time.

Revelations of a plotless ballet

SWAN LAKE which reflects every credit on the company's newly appointed Director, Miss Skeaping, shared the ballet portion of the Festival programmes with an evening of repertory ballets, made up of Birgit Cullberg's *Miss Julie* and *Medea* and Bjorn Holmgren's *Suite Classique*.

Suite Classique is a large-scale plotless ballet to Lalo music that tended more to expose the company's shortcomings than to reveal its qualities. Holmgren, one of the principal male dancers, who was on leave in England dancing with Ballet Comique at the time of the Festival, was unable to impart any degree of originality to his neo-classical choreography.

The music, some of which was from the ballet *Namouna*, recalled only too clearly memories of Lifar's *Suite en Blanc* at the Paris Opéra and provoked a mental comparison most unfavourable to the Swedes. The ballet's setting by Catherine Winbergh was modernistically tasteless. (How a nation can show such excellent taste in decorating a room, and yet such poor taste when it comes to decorating a stage is puzzling). Gunnel Lindgren (one of the company's principals) danced well, and Elis Gustavsson made the most of his brief entry.

Second time lucky

I WRITE about *Miss Julie* and *Medea* with the horrifying knowledge that many of my readers will have seen versions of these two ballets when a company itself the Swedish Ballet appeared at the Princess Theatre, London, in 1950. No one could have been more contemptuous of the artistic merits of that disastrous season than myself, and yet I can assure all fellow-sufferers that Miss Cullberg is a choreographer of importance and that *Miss Julie* and *Medea* are, together with Ivo Cramer's *The Message*, the most notable Scandinavian ballets I have yet seen.

The strange thing is that *Miss Julie* in Stockholm is not remarkably different from the production we saw in London. The reasons for its earlier failure are many and various—wrong sort of publicity (this above all others), poorish dancing, bad orchestral playing, indifferent decor and costumes—the list can be extended but the mystery can never be quite explained.

Willy Sandburg and Gerd Andersson, of the Royal Swedish Ballet, in Birgit Cullberg's version of Euripedes' Medea. *The ballet has been considerably revised since it was seen in London and has now become one of the most distinguished of Cullberg's serious works.*
The Bartok score which previously suffered from an indifferent orchestra has now been exceptionally well-orchestrated by Herbert Sandberg.
Next month, Clive Barnes will write about the Royal Swedish Ballet in general and on the progress it is making.
Photo: Merkel Rydberg

It is a workmanlike dramatic ballet that catches the twilight madness of Strindberg's play. Strindberg's masochistic pessimism will never attract me, but I am forced to admire the skill with which Cullberg has expressed it in her ballet. What the ballet lacks is the concise exposition of theme that is the play's chief technical virtue; Cullberg has expanded and made a narrative out of what was a psychological situation, so shifting the work's accent from the characters on to the story.

The choreography is not undistinguished, and the music taken from the Swedish composer Ture Rangstrom arranged by Hans Grossman could hardly be bettered as an accompaniment to Strindberg.

Euripedes tragedy

BUT it is with *Medea* that Cullberg puts forward her most serious claims for our attention. This is the third ballet she has based on Euripedes' tragedy and the contrast between this and the first version we saw in London (whatever the disadvantages under which that laboured) is almost unbelievable.

Possibly the reader will recall that at the end of the London version Medea enters trundling her murdered children along in a hand-cart and so providing a moment of unintentionally comic bathos that I for one will long treasure. In Stockholm she makes her entry dragging her dead children behind her on a long flowing cloak and somehow touches tragedy. I have singled out this incident as being typical of the changes Cullberg has wrought.

Her ballet opens with a startling dance-image of family life—the two children held within the entwined bodies of Medea and Jason in sculptured pose of compelling beauty. Although the ballet never quite lives up to the promise held out by this opening instant it is an engrossing and dynamic work, marking a great advance on *Miss Julie*.

Her style is compounded of Jooss and classical ballet, expressionism and ballet classicism being blended in her work. Well not quite blended, as she still has to acquire fluency in using the classical palette. Too many classical steps are used self-consciously and out of context with the rest of the dance. Furthermore her ground patterns are too symmetrical and she tends to move her *corps de ballet* along straight parallel lines, but this may have been in an attempt to match the effect of the Greek chorus.

I understand that Cullberg also produces comedy ballets, and one of these I would like to see because these two works are both unutterably intense, and intensity without a sense of humour can be dangerous in leading to pretentiousness—I still warily remember a little ballet of hers based on Kafka, called *Stone Portal*. Nevertheless Cullberg is that rare thing a genuine choreographer and, basing my opinion on the development showed by *Medea*, she has it within her to do great things.

The score for *Medea* was an exceptionally well-orchestrated collection of Bartok piano pieces (principally *Microkosmus*) arranged by Herbert Sandberg. The rich costumes and simple ramp-setting by Alva Granstrom added much to the production, as did the excellent lighting.

Experienced and promising artists

BOTH the Cullberg works were well performed, with Elsa Marianne von Rosen scoring a personal success both as Miss Julie and Medea. The character of Miss Julie is so old-fashioned to contemporary minds (nice young girls today are rarely faced with a straight choice between death or dishonour) and it is almost impossible to make a credible character out of Strindberg's heroine. However Rosen did her best and danced quite exceptionally well. The imprudent shamelessness of the role she conveyed with tantalising verve.

Her Medea is a fine performance that gives a measure of how much she has improved since she last appeared in London. Her hard incisive dancing dominated the ballet's action, while her acting was made impressive by a quality of controlled passion. It would be interesting to see her in some of Tudor's ballets.

If there is a more despicable character in drama than the valet Jean in *Miss Julie* I have yet to meet him. Rhodin has far too much charm to play him as Strindberg presumably intended, but this apart, he danced excellently. His virile forceful dancing acted as a perfect foil to the voluptuous languor of Miss von Rosen.

In *Medea* the other leading roles were played by two of the company's most promising young dancers, Willy Sandberg and Gerd Andersson. Sandberg, just a little reminiscent of Pirmin Trecu in style, has definite quality. His acting is not good but his dancing, at present a little uncouth, holds a hint of excitement in it.

Andersson is a sparkling type of dancer who would be an immediate favourite with English audiences. Like Mariane Orlando she was, for a short time, a student at the Sadler's Wells School. Pretty and vivacious, with a personality that bounces out over the footlights, she could develop into anything from a Swanilda to a film-star. A Jason faced with such a Medea as Miss von Rosen, and such a Kreusa as Miss Andersson, would never search for another Golden Fleece.

The company of Basque dancers who are to appear at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in August. The male dancers of the company are seen in Le Livre d'Extahun, *a warlike dance from the province of Biscay.* *Photo: Lipnitzki*

Next month our regular reports from France, by Marie Françoise Christout, and from America, by Arthur Todd, will be resumed.

Ballet Dates

FESTIVAL BALLET
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July
26-31 *The Nutcracker, Pas de Quatre, Symphony for Fun*

August
2-7 *Swan Lake, Alice in Wonderland, Beau Danube*
9-14 *La Esmeralda*
16-18 *Sylphides, Scheherazade, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
19-21 *Sylphides, Petrouchka, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
23-28 *Concerto* (Grieg), *Vision of Marguerite, Don Quixote, Vilia*
30 to Sept. 1 *Giselle, Napoli*
2-4 *The Nutcracker, Napoli*
6-11 *La Esmeralda*

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July
26 Tor and Torridge Festival, Barnstaple

August
16 Birmingham Repertory, Birmingham (3 weeks)

September
6 Civic Theatre, Chesterfield
13 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
20 Gaiety, Dublin (2 weeks)

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
at the Empire Theatre

The Sadler's Wells Ballet in homage to Diaghilev

August
23-28 *Three-Cornered Hat, L'Oiseau de Feu* (new production), *La Boutique Fantasque*

Shakespeare production with ballet

August 31 to Sept. 11 *Midsummer Night's Dream* with Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann and full ballet

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at Covent Garden

August
31 *Boutique Fantasque, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
Sept. 1-2-3 *Sylphides, Homage to the Queen, Mam'zelle Angot*
4(M) *Sylphides, Homage to the Queen, Boutique Fantasque*
4(E) *Sylphides, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
6 *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
7 *Boutique Fantasque, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
8 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Elvin, Field)
9 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Jackson, Field)
10 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11(M) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Rassine)
11(E) *Patineurs, Mam'zelle Angot, Homage to the Queen*
13 *Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Rassine)
14 *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird, Daphnis and Chloe*
15 *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird Daphnis and Chloe*
16 *Sleeping Beauty* (Elvin, Hart)
17 *Patineurs, Daphnis and Chloe, Homage to the Queen*
18(M) *Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Field)
18(E) *Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
20 *Giselle* (Heaton, Field), *Three-Cornered Hat*
21 *Sylphides, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
22 *Three-Cornered Hat, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
23 *Giselle* (Clayden, Rassine), *Boutique Fantasque*
24 *Sylphides, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
25(M) *Coppelia* (Lindsay, Doyle)
25(E) *Coppelia* (Dale, Shaw)

BALLETS BASQUES ETORKI
(Company of Basque Dancers) at Sadler's Wells Theatre

August
9 for three weeks

CONTINENTAL BALLET
at The Little Theatre, Southport

Summer season of classics, contemporary works and Spanish dances.

CITY BALLET SOCIETY
at Toynbee Hall
Lunch time Ballet (1.15 to 1.45).

Sept. 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30,
Oct. 1 Company includes: Jeanne Artois, Irene Elton, Diana Payne, Jane Evans, Glen Gordon, Harry Cordwell, Basil Pattison, Philippe Perrotet. At the piano, Michael Hobson.

Two dancers of the Basque company, which is appearing at Sadler's Wells Theatre, in Ezpata Dantza de Zumarraga (*Dance of the Daggers*). *This is performed outside the 18th century church Caballeritos de Azkoitia.* *Photo: Lido*

NEXT MONTH

Look for SVETLANA BERIOSOVA, of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, on the front cover of our September issue, on sale August 25.

Also in this number will be *Personalities of the Paris Opera* **by IVOR GUEST. Pictures and stories of the dancers of France's great ballet company which is to appear at Covent Garden in September.**

The production of *Swan Lake* **in Russia by EVAN SENIOR. Details of the productions and performances of the Tchaikovsky-Ivanov ballet as it is given today in the U.S.S.R.**

A further exploration as to how the theories of Noverre are being followed today by A. V. COTON.

New Ballets. Criticisms of all aspects, together with many new pictures of John Cranko's *Variations on a Theme* **for Ballet Rambert, and on Nicholas Beriosoff's new production of** *La Esmeralda* **for Festival Ballet.**

A picture feature on The Royal Swedish Ballet by CLIVE BARNES.

News from at home includes the season of Festival Ballet, The Basque Dancers, the film *Trio Ballet*, **Television, etc.**

News from France by MARIE FRANCOISE CHRISTOUT, from America and Mexico by ARTHUR TODD, from Australia by E. C. MASON. All the usual features and over 40 pictures.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Bertram Park, is of Tamara Karsavina in the title role in Fokine's *Firebird* **for the Diaghilev Ballet.**

KARSAVINA was born in Russia in 1885. Brought up in the school of the Maryinsky Theatre (now Kirov) in St. Petersburg she arose to become a ballerina in that great company. She was the daughter of the famous Russian dancer Platon Karsavin. Among the ballets in which she danced in the Imperial Theatre were: *The Awakening of Flora, The Humpbacked Horse, La Bayadère, Le Corsaire, Raymonda, The Nutcracker, Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

She joined the Diaghilev Ballet in 1929 and then divided her time between the two companies until the Russian revolution when she came to live in Western Europe. As Diaghilev's greatest ballerina she remained with the company almost continuously until it finished in 1929. She was the greatest exponent and follower of Fokine's theories and in his ballets she created many roles principally the Waltz in *Les Sylphides*, Columbine in *Carnaval*, The Ballerina in *Petrouchka*, The Young Girl in *Le Spectre de la Rose*, the title roles in *Firebird* and *Thamar* and The Queen of Shemakhan in *Le Coq d'Or*. Apart from these she also created roles in Massine ballets, notably The Millar's Wife in *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

But Karsavina was a fine classical ballerina as well and probably had the greatest range of any ballerina in the history of ballet. Today she lives in England where she came with her late husband, the British diplomat, Henry Bruce. As a teacher of great classic roles and of mime she has no equal.

This month's back cover, by Gyenes, is of Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky who are now appearing with Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall.

KOVACH and Rabovsky are Hungarians who were principal dancers of the Budapest State Ballet. They have also danced in Russia with the Kirov Ballet in Leningrad. While appearing in the Russian zone of Berlin last year they escaped into the Western sector and have since appeared first with Festival Ballet in London, later with Roland Petit in Paris and New York also on American television and in cabaret at Las Vegas. They re-joined Festival Ballet this spring for their continental tour and will remain with the company for their current London season and their transcontinental American tour which starts in October.

happy birthday to...

		Aug.
Sigurd Leeder	Teacher	14
John Cranko	Sadler's Wells Organisation	15
Anne Rowse	Festival Ballet	15
Peggy Rae Norman	Royal Winnipeg Ballet	16
Michael Lland	Ballet Theatre	17
Rochelle Balzer	Ballet Theatre	18
Alfred Rodrigues	Sadler's Wells Ballet	18
Christine Mayer	Ballet Theatre	19
Roy Tobias	New York City Ballet	22
Barbara Bocher	New York City Ballet	26
		Sept.
Yvonne Mounsey	New York City Ballet	2
Ruth Sobotka	New York City Ballet	4
Errol Addison	Teacher and dancer	8
Constance Garfield	Ballet Theatre	9
Mary Drage	Sadler's Wells Ballet	10
Noreen Sopwith	Ballet Rambert	10
Vassilie Trunoff	Borovansky Ballet	14
Janet Reed	New York City Ballet	15
Peter Darrell	Cabaret and Television	16
Frederick Ashton	Sadler's Wells Organisation	17
David Poole	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	17
Geoffrey Davidson	Festival Ballet	18

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested).

LINDA HORTON, Nurses Home, Guys Hospital, London, S.E.1, wants b.c. m. or f. over 20, preferably America or the Continent, m.a. 20, o.i. music, horse-riding, travel, reading, p.r.

TINA LORD, 9 Prospect Avenue, Pye Nest, Halifax, Yorks, wants b.c. m. or f. (pref. ballet student) 14-16, London, U.S.A. or Canada, m.a. 14, o.i. collecting ballet pictures, modern music, dogs, ls. French, p.r., all answered.

HERRN HANS HAAS, in. Fa. Bohle & Cie., G.M.C.H., Cologne, Sachsenring 57, Germany, wants b.c. m. anywhere, m.a. 39, o.i. opera, drama, travelling, reading, records, all kinds of art, ls. German, French, English.

HERRN HERMAN WENDLAND, (22c) Bergisch-Gladbach, nr. Cologne, Am Muhlenberg 7, Germany, wants b.c. m. or f. under 25, anywhere, m.a. 18, o.i. sports, theatre, reading, ls. German and English.

ANDREW BROEKHUYZEN, Postbox 226, Haarlem, Holland, wants b.c. m. or f. 20-30. anywhere esp. the Orient and Germany (also coloured), m.a. 26, o.i. international affairs, reading, physical culture, body-building, baseball, travel, swimming, ls. English, German, p.r., all answered.

MISS T. KRANTZ, 22, Mounts Bay Road, Crawley, West Australia, wants b.c. m. or f., anywhere especially U.S.A., any age over 16., m.a. 18. o.i. theatre, fashion, skating, all music, sport, etc., p.r. all answered.

NIKITA M. PAVINSKY (male danseur), 41, Belsize Park Gardens, London, N.W.3, wants b.c. m. age 17-35, m.a. 30, o.i. theatre, opera, films, travel, painting, dogs, photography. p.r. all answered.

CAROL-ANN HORSFALL, 47, Doone Street, Lynmouth, New Plymouth, New Zealand, wants b.c. m. or f, age 18-20, in Scotland, Eire, Wales, France, U.S.A., Norway and N. Zealand. m.a. 17½. O.i. national dancing, reading, swimming, films, art, music, corresponding. ls. some French. p.r. all answered.

CLARENCE RIGLEY, 102, Beckley Road, Broxtowe, Nottingham, wants b.c., f, between 25-30, anywhere, m.a. 28, o.i. music, theatre.

EDU DE MOYE, 75, Middelburgse Straat, Scheveningen, Holland, wants b.c. m. age 22-35, anywhere esp. Scandinavia, Italy, France, U.S.A., American Zone of Germany, India, o.i. all arts, sports, photography, internal questions, ls. English, Dutch, little French, p.r.

BERT CANNON, 19, St. Catherine's Terrace, Hove, Sussex, wants b.c. m, between 15-25, anywhere, o.i. theatre, music, travelling, all arts, p.r. all answered.

RICHARD COWARD, Throope Down, Coombe Bissett, Salisbury, Wilts, wants b.c. m. or f, any age, in U.S.A., Germany, Italy, Spain. o.i. theatre, films, literary (modern) occult, country life.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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МУЗЫКА В СОВЕТСКОМ СОЮЗЕ СЕГОДНЯ*

What is happening to music and musicians in Russia today? Evan Senior, the editor of *Music and Musicians*, has just returned from four weeks spent studying musical conditions in Moscow, Leningrad and other Russian musical centres. He has returned with a wealth of varied impressions all of which are to be written exclusively for *Music and Musicians* and illustrated with pictures, many taken by himself. He was given full facilities by the Soviet Ministry of Culture to pursue his investigations into their musical life, to talk with their leading musicians and to see and hear their performances.

His articles will embrace all aspects of contemporary musical life in Russia today; the attitude of prominent Soviet composers and critics towards music in the West; the position of Russia's classical heritage in their musical life today; the trends of musical composition; personal experiences at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the Kirovsky Theatre in Leningrad, and other centres of opera and ballet production; the state of musical education in the Soviet Union; how modern Russian audiences react to their music; and Music and the State.

He will begin his series, "Russian Journey," in the August *Music and Musicians* with a vivid description of his first night of music in Moscow: the national celebration at the Bolshoi of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Michael Glinka, the founder of modern Russian music. In the September number he will write on "Composers in a Union," describing how the Soviet composers of today have organised their life and work, and subsequent articles will complete the full picture of music in Russia today.

Music and Musicians (1*s.* 6*d.* monthly) can be obtained from newsagents by giving an order for regular delivery, from most music shops, or by post 1*s.* 8*d.* each (10*s.* for 6 months) from *Music and Musicians*, 21 Lower Belgrave St., London, S.W.1.

**Music in the Soviet Union Today*

* *Peter Brinson will edit a new picture monthly for the critical filmgoer*

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first number October

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Full details will be announced in this magazine next month

***PETER BRINSON is a former Director of Research, Film Centre, Special Film Consultant to UNESCO and film and ballet critic for** *Time and Tide* **and** *New Statesman*. **He has produced documentary and other films, including** *The Black Swan*, **the first 3-D ballet film and the sound version of** *Pavlova*.

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This month's full ballet guide

Dance and Dancer

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